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Implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The powerful Indian Ocean earthquake and the tsunami of 26 December 2004 and the outcomes of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction had far-reaching influences on the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction during the past 12 months.

The tsunami triggered one of the most devastating disasters in living memory. There is widespread recognition that, if an early warning system for tsunamis had been in place in that region, many thousands of lives could have been saved.

The World Conference on Disaster Reduction, held at Kobe, Hyogo, Japan, adopted the Hyogo Declaration and the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters, which represent a landmark in universal understanding of disasters induced by natural hazards and reflect a solid commitment to implement a disaster reduction agenda. States, international and regional organizations and other stakeholders resolved to pursue a substantial reduction of disaster losses, in lives and in the social, economic and environmental assets of countries and communities over the next 10 years. The Conference demonstrated that the world community urgently needs to join forces to break the vicious circle between poverty, environmental degradation and lack of preparation that turns natural hazards into disasters that destroy hard-won development gains. Numerous organizations of the United Nations system, regional bodies, Governments and civil society participate actively in the Strategy and its mechanisms to coordinate and guide disaster risk reduction and its integration into development planning and action.

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The present report provides an overview of the implementation of the Strategy and the follow-up to the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 59/231. It summarizes the essential elements of the Hyogo Framework for Action and gives an account of the follow-up actions taken under the Strategy by the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction, the inter-agency secretariat of the Strategy, national and regional entities and international organizations. The report contains a section on disasters associated with natural hazards and vulnerability, as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 59/233, to highlight the role of disaster risk reduction as an essential policy tool to reduce vulnerability and reach the goals set out in the United Nations Millennium Declaration. It also reports on the advancements of early warning systems following the Indian Ocean tsunami.

Several studies, independent evaluations and consultations on the capacities and functioning of the international mechanisms for disaster reduction have pointed to the need for substantial changes and strengthening of the Strategy system in order to better support the implementation of the Hyogo Framework and meet the needs of its many stakeholders. Proposed changes to achieve such strengthening are outlined in the report.

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I. World Conference on Disaster Reduction Follow-up to the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters

A. Introduction

1. In its resolution 58/214, the General Assembly decided to convene a World Conference on Disaster Reduction in January 2005. That conference was held (a) to conclude a review of the 10-year-old Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation and of the Strategy Plan of Action, with a view to updating the guiding framework on disaster reduction for the twenty-first century; (b) to identify specific actions aimed at ensuring the implementation of the relevant provisions of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation) in the areas of vulnerability, risk assessment and disaster management; (c) to share best practices and lessons learned to further disaster reduction; (d) to increase awareness of the importance of disaster reduction policies; and (e) to increase the reliability and availability of disaster-related information to the public and disaster management agencies in all regions. The Strategy secretariat was to serve as the secretariat of the Conference and to coordinate preparatory activities.

2. The General Assembly, in its resolution 59/231, reiterated its invitation to Member States, all United Nations bodies and specialized agencies and other relevant intergovernmental agencies and organizations, in particular the members of the Task Force, to participate actively in the Conference. It also requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly, at its sixtieth session, a report on the implementation of the resolution, and in particular on the outcome of that Conference.

3. The World Conference on Disaster Reduction, hosted by the Government of Japan, was held in Kobe, Hyogo, from 18 to 22 January 2005, just three weeks after a powerful earthquake and tsunami had engulfed the Indian Ocean region and had caused one of the most devastating disasters in living memory. According to the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters in Brussels, during the period May 2004-April 2005, disasters associated with natural hazards killed nearly 250,000 people worldwide and affected, mainly through injuries and material losses, some 157 million people, causing damage evaluated at some US$ 102 billion.

4. The Conference attracted worldwide attention and assumed an unprecedented level of significance with regard to disaster risk reduction. It brought together some 4,000 people from interested public and private entities from around the world, with participants from 168 States, 78 observer bodies, 161 non-governmental organizations and 562 journalists representing 152 media organizations. The Public Forum, which offered a platform for information exchange with the public, welcomed some 40,000 participants and hosted 66 workshops.

5. The Conference represented a landmark in worldwide understanding of and commitment to implementing a comprehensive disaster risk reduction agenda. It revealed the wealth of knowledge and practical abilities that exists in the area of

disaster risk reduction but which has not been made available in a consolidated manner or applied as effectively as it could have been. It also revealed the outstanding challenges to ensure that development sectors within the United Nations system, international financial institutions, national and local public administrations and the private sector adopt risk assessments and disaster-resilient development practices. Problematic issues related to the financing of such undertakings are frequently unresolved. Lessons learned from the tsunami-hit countries also revealed other weaknesses pointing to the need for increased educational and awareness programmes, early warning and institutional preparedness capacities.

6. In the course of the preparatory work and debates, the Conference helped shape the emergence of a new political will to translate words into action and to apply available human and technical resources to the search for solutions in disaster-prone countries and regions around the world. The Conference forcefully demonstrated that the tragedy in the Indian Ocean region had strengthened the determination of participants to reach tangible conclusions and to agree on a clearly defined action plan against which commitments and achievements could be measured in the future. That political will was expressed in the Conference outcomes (see A/CONF.206/6), the Hyogo Declaration and the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters, a Common statement of the Special Session on the Indian Ocean Disaster: risk reduction for a safer future and the Review of the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World.

B. Essential elements of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015

7. The Hyogo Framework provides a clear and authoritative framework for pursuing disaster risk reduction and builds on other relevant multilateral frameworks and declarations (see A/CONF.206/6, chap. I, resolution 2). The Framework constitutes an agreement that was developed through exhaustive negotiations between States, experts and collaborating organizations. It reflects their intention to take a holistic approach in identifying and putting into action complex multidisciplinary disaster risk reduction measures over the next 10 years. Most important, it gives new impetus to the strategies outlined in the Yokohama Strategy by setting out the collective and individual roles and responsibilities of groups of stakeholders in its implementation and follow-up.

8. Starting with the premise that the expected outcome should be a substantial reduction of disaster losses, in lives and in the social, economic and environmental assets of communities and countries, to be achieved over the next 10 years, the Hyogo Framework calls for the pursuit of the following three strategic goals:

(a) More effective integration of disaster risk considerations into sustainable development policies, planning and programming at all levels, with special emphasis on disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness and vulnerability reduction;

(b) Development and strengthening of institutions, mechanisms and capacities at all levels, in particular the community level, with a view to contributing systematically to building resilience to hazards;

(c) Systematic incorporation of risk reduction approaches into the design and implementation of emergency preparedness, response and recovery programmes for the post-disaster reconstruction of affected communities.

9. In addition, the Conference adopted the following five priorities for future action, with a set of key activities:

(a) Ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation;

(b) Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning;

(c) Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels;

(d) Reduce the underlying risk factors;

(e) Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels.

10. The Hyogo Framework emphasizes that the primary responsibility for implementation and follow-up lies with States, involving national public administration structures, the scientific community and civil society. States are called upon to build a strong sense of ownership in the area of disaster risk reduction within their populations and support of local Governments capacities. Most important, States should also conceive mechanisms that allow bottom-up disaster risk reduction initiatives, originating at the community level and contributing to the shaping of disaster risk reduction policy and programmes at the national level.

11. The roles of regional institutions and organizations include transnational responsibilities, since disasters and risk are not bound by national borders. In that context, the Hyogo Framework specifically notes the need for developing regional initiatives and the risk reduction capacities of regional mechanisms.

12. International organizations, including those of the United Nations system and international financial institutions, are called upon to integrate the goals of the Hyogo Framework into their own strategies, making use of existing coordination mechanisms such as the United Nations Development Group and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, as well as the resident coordinator system and United Nations country teams. They should assist disaster-prone developing countries in their efforts to increase institutional and technical capacities to address the priorities set out in the Hyogo Framework.

13. The Strategy system, through the Task Force, platforms and the secretariat, in collaboration with agencies and experts, is to provide support to this process, specifically to assist in facilitating and coordinating action among stakeholders. The Strategy system also has a decisive role in furthering advocacy and resource mobilization and information-sharing and reporting.

C. Follow-up action by the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction system

14. Following the Conference, as a first step in the follow-up process, the secretariat conducted a broad-based consultation with the Strategy stakeholders and Task Force members, and presented to the Task Force, at its eleventh session in May 2005, a set of strategic directions to assist in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework. The Task Force reworked and adopted those directions and requested that guiding principles be specifically brought to the attention of States, national platforms and the constituencies of the Task Force members to support them in setting their implementation policy parameters as follows:

(a) The Hyogo Framework is the cornerstone of the Strategy. The task of the Strategy system in the coming years will be to implement the Hyogo Framework;

(b) National and local implementation of the Hyogo Framework is the essential goal for the Strategy system. All key actors (national and local Governments, civil society, regional and international organizations) should join forces towards that goal;

(c) Disaster risk reduction is an integral part of sustainable development and one of the essential prerequisites for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;

(d) Disaster risk reduction diminishes the need for humanitarian emergency interventions in the aftermath of disasters;

(e) Investment in disaster risk reduction thus enhances sustainable development and enables humanitarian assistance capacity to be applied more effectively;

(f) The Hyogo Framework calls for concerted and well-sequenced actions. Key priorities and actions will therefore have to be selected for local, national, regional and global levels.

15. In the implementation of the Hyogo Framework, a particularly crucial role is assigned to the national-level stakeholders. In countries with established coordination mechanisms or systems assisted by the United Nations system, the support of resident/humanitarian coordinators and United Nations country teams is called for to help design disaster risk reduction measures with a sense of urgency. To ensure the sustained effective implementation of such measures, it is important that disaster risk reduction initiatives build on the development needs and initiatives generated at the local level.

16. With the adoption of the strategic directions, the Strategy system is called upon to focus on the following areas:

(a) Institutional commitments: support for national action plans and priorities, including national platforms for disaster risk reduction; facilitation of a matrix of commitments and initiatives of the Strategy system, outlining responsibilities, resources and action programmes to enable participating organizations to set up collaborative arrangements and multi-stakeholder partnerships; and facilitation of regional initiatives;

(b) Planning and programming: development of planning and programming tools for use as disaster risk reduction instruments, to be included in common country assessments (CCAs), United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) and poverty reduction strategy papers; preparation of planning guidance tools for priority action at national and community levels in individual sectors such as public administration, urban management, environment, health, education, water, agriculture and telecommunications;

(c) Awareness and advocacy: formulation of awareness and advocacy strategies for specific general and local uses; preparation of annual awareness campaigns for the International Day for Disaster Reduction; training tools and organization of inter-agency workshops;

(d) Reporting on progress and monitoring: identification of appropriately adapted sets of benchmarks and generic indicators to measure progress in reaching the goals and priorities of the Hyogo Framework at global, national and local levels; incorporation of disaster risk reduction parameters into existing United Nations and intergovernmental reporting requirements related to the Millennium Development Goals, sustainable development and climate change adaptation; and nomination of lead agencies for effective guidance and reporting, as reflected in the matrix-based description of commitments and initiatives.

D. International commitments

17. The Task Force decided at its eleventh session that a matrix should be prepared, showing commitments and initiatives in support of the implementation of the Hyogo Framework. That matrix is currently being developed, coordinated by the secretariat, to be circulated later in 2005. It will identify the task managers drawn from specialized agencies, funds and programmes, technical networks and regional organizations, taking responsibility on behalf of their international organizations (governmental and non-governmental) for follow-up and support to the five priority areas of the Hyogo Framework. Detailed information on strategic commitments and distribution of tasks will be compiled by the secretariat, with updates being supplied through the website www.unisdr.org. Specific actions by stakeholders and United Nations agencies will be described in periodic progress reports, consolidated and disseminated by the secretariat, according to the five priority areas. A set of tentative benchmarks, guidelines and generic indicators that can be adapted to national environments is being developed, facilitated by the Strategy secretariat and the involvement of Task Force members and national experts.

18. Many United Nations agencies and programmes, as well as other international and regional organizations and bodies, have initiated national and regional follow-up to the provisions of the Hyogo Framework. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee is reviewing its potential role in the area of preparedness for effective response, while the Strategy secretariat and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have initiated plans with the United Nations Development Group Office with a view to supporting United Nations country teams. Some organizations, including the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), have reoriented their planning processes by redirecting the allocation of resources to ensure that their activities are

aligned with the parameters set by the Hyogo Framework. Specifically, the 57th WMO Executive Council approved an organization-wide coordination framework and a detailed implementation plan for the multihazard approach of the organization to disaster reduction, led by its Natural Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Programme. WMO has engaged in strategic partnerships with key agencies to ensure that warnings issued by national meteorological and hydrological services be used more effectively for preparedness and emergency response at the international level through to the local level. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group proposed an action plan in March 2005 to develop technical standards in support of telecommunications for disaster preparedness and early warning.

19. Thematic platforms and networks will be engaged or, where necessary, specifically developed to assist in the implementation of distinct components of the Hyogo Framework. These include the Platform for the Promotion of Early Warning, currently operated by the Strategy secretariat, and the International Recovery Platform, recently launched in Kobe by the Asian Disaster Reduction Centre, the Government of Japan, the International Labour Organization, the Strategy secretariat, UNDP and the World Bank. The purpose of the Platform, to be operated by UNDP, is to develop a mechanism to integrate systematically risk reduction into post-disaster recovery efforts and to benefit from lessons learned. The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme have also committed staff time and resources to support the Platform. In a related area, UNDP, together with the German Technical Cooperation, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the ProVention Consortium, UNEP, UNV and the World Bank, is developing a system-wide post-disaster needs assessment methodology to support in-country recovery planning frameworks. UNEP is working on post-disaster assessments of environmental impacts, with a view to incorporating environmental concerns into the design of processes of recovery and restoration. Other platforms essentially focusing on information sharing and knowledge management, the strengthening of institutions, training and environmental risk management are being discussed under the aegis of the Strategy.

E. National and regional developments and initiatives

20. The emphasis of the Hyogo Framework on the national dimension in its implementation and follow-up, with the primary responsibility of States, requires, as a corollary, the development of strong participatory and collaborative ties with civil society and national and local authorities with the national development sectors, the national disaster management systems and scientific and technical support organizations. The Hyogo Framework specifically calls for the establishment or strengthening of national platforms for disaster risk reduction, anchored to existing national systems, to review, coordinate, guide and support the national commitments.

21. The pursuit of that national ownership requirement has already stimulated tangible follow-up. National workshops for disaster risk reduction in countries including China, Costa Rica, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Peru, Timor-Leste, Viet Nam and Yemen have been held or are being planned with a multisectoral approach to determine national priorities in implementing the Hyogo Framework. National

platforms have also facilitated coordination across sectors at national and regional levels to promote disaster risk reduction awareness. Initiatives are under way in Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Chad, China, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Madagascar, Nigeria, Panama, Peru, Senegal, Seychelles, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda to review national disaster risk reduction plans and to strengthen or create national platforms in support of broader national policy initiatives and the development of sustainable institutional systems to deal with disaster risk. As an example, Bangladesh published its *Corporate Plan 2005-2009: A Framework for Action*, which lays out a national vision to "reduce the vulnerability of the people, especially the poor, to the effects of natural, environmental and human induced hazards". The Plan defines goals and key result areas, drawing from global agendas and national inputs, including the Strategy and its Hyogo Framework, the Millennium Development Goals, the World Summit for Sustainable Development, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, poverty reduction strategy papers and UNDAFs. Following the Conference, the Islamic Republic of Iran established a secretariat within its Natural Disaster Research Institute to help implement the Hyogo Framework. The secretariat is constituted of representatives of relevant ministries and institutions, which are in the process of preparing a 10-year plan of action to achieve disaster risk reduction. India set up its national disaster management authority to strengthen the national and institutional legislative system to deal with disaster risk reduction.

22. Interactions and collaboration among national platforms are increasing through multilateral and bilateral meetings, assisted by the Strategy secretariat and Task Force members. For example, with the regional unit of the Strategy secretariat acting as a facilitator and the African Union Commission as a host, a forum of national platform focal points of African countries was launched within the context of the Africa Regional Strategy on Disaster Risk Reduction. The forum agreed to meet regularly at the regional level to share information and experiences with the principal objective of monitoring and influencing national implementation of the Hyogo Framework. Similarly, national platforms in Europe (Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Spain and Sweden) have developed a self-organized process of networking.

Regional

23. While the impetus may vary from one region to another, as reiterated during the regional sessions held at the Conference, regional and subregional organizations continue to play a crucial role in the implementation of the Strategy. The Task Force requested the secretariat at its eleventh session[1] to prepare a review of regional and subregional strategies for the implementation of the Hyogo Framework and progress in the strengthening of the regional outreach of the Strategy system, as a means to help foster and strengthen cooperation on disaster reduction among existing regional stakeholders, cross-fertilize their activities and promote regional partnerships.

24. The regional nature of the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster, both in its impact across the whole Indian Ocean rim and in the response, is a further reminder of the importance of regional approaches in disaster risk reduction. A coordination mechanism[2] under the UNESCO Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission has been put in place to facilitate regional capacities for the detection of potential tsunamigenic events and to issue warnings. Regional institutions[3] are contributing to the establishment of a tsunami early warning system for the region. The common

statement adopted at the Conference requested the Strategy secretariat to report on regional mechanisms for disaster reduction to the General Assembly (see A/CONF.206/6, annex II).

25. In order to better support stakeholders at national and regional levels, the Strategy secretariat is currently strengthening its regional outreach capacities in close collaboration with UNDP, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and regional organizations. In addition to the existing outreach units for Africa (Nairobi-based, hosted by UNEP) and Latin America and the Caribbean (San José and Panama, hosted by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)/WHO), Strategy units have been developed for Asia since May 2005 (based in Bangkok, hosted by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific), with a staff member in Central Asia since 2004 (based in Dushanbe, hosted by UNDP). Those units work in close coordination with the regional advisers for disaster reduction of the UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs regional disaster response advisers. In support of this, UNDP will deploy national disaster risk reduction advisers to assist national efforts in capacity-building for disaster risk reduction in 20 of the most disaster-prone countries of the world.

26. Previous reports of the Secretary-General (A/59/228, A/58/277) have outlined regional political commitments made towards disaster risk reduction. Numerous regional consultations are supporting regional efforts to implement the Hyogo Framework, as detailed below. It is particularly encouraging to see initiatives in regions previously less active in the area of disaster risk reduction.

27. The United Nations is reviewing current progress in the implementation of the Programme of Action of the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010, in which the issue of disaster risk is recognized as an important area of focus in coming years. Similarly, the follow-up to the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States includes the issues of disaster risk reduction and the Hyogo Framework. A key challenge and a priority of the Strategy secretariat is to facilitate coherence between those processes and ensure that they are mutually reinforcing.

Africa

28. African Governments have been particularly responsive to the Hyogo Framework, building on ongoing commitments to disaster reduction. The African Union (AU) Commission and its New Partnership for Africa's Development secretariat, working under the umbrella of the Africa Working Group of the Task Force and assisted by the Strategy secretariat regional unit, UNDP, the African Development Bank and other partners, facilitated country-level consultations to develop an African regional strategy for disaster risk reduction. That strategy was adopted by the AU and the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment and acknowledged by the Assembly of the African Union in 2004. To strengthen that process following the Conference, an intergovernmental advisory group[4] was established to help mobilize higher levels of political commitment and link national needs and concerns with United Nations assistance in disaster risk reduction.

29. Levels of commitment and progress at the subregional level require further strengthening. New developments include partnerships in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to promote disaster risk reduction and to design subregional common policies on disaster risk reduction.

Asia and the Pacific

30. In Asia, Governments are building greater commitments to disaster risk reduction through several mechanisms. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Committee on Disaster Management is working with national authorities to facilitate coordination among its Member States in managing regional cooperation in disaster management and emergency response. It proposed a regional agreement on such collaboration to its members for ratification.

31. Pacific countries are developing, with the support of the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission, a strategy for the implementation of the Hyogo Framework in their region. The guiding principles of the strategy address specific gaps and challenges identified by Pacific Island communities through the Commission Pacific Islands Regional Progress Report (1994-2004) and the pacific regional position paper prepared for the Conference.

32. ESCAP contributes, through its 52 members and associate members, to the mainstreaming of disaster reduction into sustainable development, with particular focus on water-related disasters, especially floods and drought. The Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre, based in Bangkok, is working through the Consultative Committee on Regional Cooperation in Disaster Management on mainstreaming disaster risk reduction into the social and economic development efforts of the Governments of the region. The Committee comprises heads of national disaster management authorities from 24 countries in Asia. The Asian Disaster Reduction Centre is a specialized organization for disaster reduction based in Kobe, Japan. Composed of 23 member countries and four additional advisory countries, the Centre relates to focal points in participating Governments and facilitates the exchange of information and training. Its next annual conference, to be held in Seoul in March 2006, will address issues related to the institutional basis for disaster risk reduction, recovery and risk communication, in response to the Hyogo Framework.

33. To maximize the respective strategic advantages of each organization in planning and implementing concrete initiatives for the benefit of Asian communities and countries, the open-ended International Strategy for Disaster Reduction Asia Partnership for disaster reduction was established jointly by the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre, the Asian Disaster Reduction Centre, UNDP, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, ESCAP and the Strategy secretariat.

34. In Central Asia, the Strategy secretariat, with several agencies, including UNDP and the Asian Disaster Reduction Centre, facilitated consultative meetings to bring together Government representatives, international organizations and donor agencies to enhance information exchange and cooperation. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan are now in the process of establishing national strategies in the region for the coming 10 years.

35. The Chinese Government will be hosting a high-level Asian conference on disaster reduction in Beijing in September 2005 to take stock of progress and seek to raise the commitment in the region to the implementation of the Hyogo Framework. China offered to host an international centre for collaboration on drought-related issues in the region. Similarly, the hosting of a centre for collaboration on seismic risk issues is planned by the Islamic Republic of Iran.

36. Regional networks of NGOs in support of disaster reduction have become more active in the preparation of and follow-up to the Conference. The Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network (see www.adrrn.net) was formed in 2002 to support NGO activities and promote cooperation. UNV is developing a regional initiative for capacity-building of national and local volunteer resources and NGOs, with a view to increasing community preparedness for disasters in South Asia. UNV is also strengthening the regional South-South cooperation modality for exchanging United Nations Volunteers with disaster risk management expertise for initial response to disasters and recovery.

Latin America and the Caribbean

37. The Organization of American States (OAS) called, at the most recent session of its General Assembly, for a joint consultative body of the Permanent Council on Hemispheric Security and the Inter-American Council for Integral Development/Permanent Executive Committee to work on the immediate implementation of risk management recommendations, review existing OAS structures and propose a single Inter-American committee to address all aspects of disaster management. It will convene a hemispheric meeting on the costs and benefits of investing in disaster risk reduction and will bring forward recommendations to the OAS Permanent Council to urge member States to establish short time frames for the implementation of the recommendations of the Inter-American Strategic Plan for Policy on Vulnerability Reduction, Risk Management and Disaster Response, and to work in close collaboration with the Strategy secretariat, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, IFRC and other relevant partners. Natural hazard risk reduction is one of three agenda items of the upcoming First Inter-American Meeting of Ministers and High-Level Officials on Sustainable Development in 2005.

38. Cuba hosted a meeting organized by the Association of Caribbean States, the United Nations system (UNDP and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), IFRC and the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Management Agency, in cooperation with the Strategy secretariat.[5] In support of the Hyogo Framework, it promoted cross-cultural networks for disaster risk reduction to facilitate collaboration and exchange of disaster risk reduction lessons and good practices among English-, Spanish-, Dutch- and French-speaking countries and territories, building on the network developed by UNDP as part of the Caribbean Risk Management Initiative.

39. Other regional activities contribute to the priorities set out in the Hyogo Framework. In response to the December 2004 tsunami, the Coordination Center for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America convened a meeting for representatives from different sectors to discuss a regional strategy for implementing a Central American tsunami early warning system, and to secure resources for updating the Central America regional disaster reduction plan

(2006-2015). PAHO/WHO has been assisting countries in implementing the Hyogo Framework recommendations for ensuring safer hospitals by 2015. Practical guidelines for making hospitals safe will be produced by the end of 2005. Several countries found it practical to use disaster resistant hospitals as an example of a benchmark for reducing overall disaster risk. Andean countries have integrated the Hyogo Framework in the implementation of the Andean strategy approved by Heads of States in July 2004.

Europe

40. Triggered by the December 2004 tsunami, the European Commission issued a communication to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions,[6] in which the Commission recognized the broad range of policies and financing instruments at its disposal that can contribute to disaster risk reduction. The Commission is conscious of the need for a more coherent European approach and sees the Hyogo Framework as the appropriate starting point.

41. The European Commission and the Africa-Caribbean-Pacific States (ACP) secretariat established an ACP-European Union (EU) Natural Disaster Facility to support ACP countries in building up resilience to disasters, as called for by the Hyogo Framework. That initiative has recently been endorsed by the EU and is expected to start its activities in the near future in collaboration with the Strategy secretariat and other partners.

II. Disasters associated with natural hazards and vulnerability: a development challenge

42. General Assembly resolution 59/233 calls for assistance to countries to reduce their vulnerability to disasters, which constitutes an essential requirement for their development. The Hyogo Framework acknowledges that "Disaster risk reduction is a cross-cutting issue in the context of sustainable development and therefore an important element for the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration" (see A/CONF.206/6, chap. I, resolution 2). Countries from sub-Saharan Africa were identified as those least likely to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.[7] Those countries are also some of the most vulnerable to disasters.

43. Much work remains in order to change the development paradigm to seriously assess and reduce disaster risk. The Atlantic hurricane season in 2004 and its early start in 2005 caused significant loss of life and damage to property in the Caribbean, where the most vulnerable were the hardest hit. Severe to moderate droughts in mid-2005 affected Austria, the Balkan countries, France, Hungary, Italy, Portugal and Spain, leading to important agricultural losses. Earlier in 2005, landslides and an earthquake in Indonesia, avalanches in India, floods in Pakistan and Ethiopia, and an earthquake in the Islamic Republic of Iran left devastation in their wake. Currently two thirds of all disasters are climate- or weather-related and the trend of increase in their number outnumber other hazards. According to the World Meteorological Organization, 2004 was the fourth hottest year since 1861, bringing heat waves, drought and an above-average number of hurricanes and deadly typhoons to some regions of the world, while others experienced disastrous floods

and mudslides produced by above-average precipitation. According to a recent study by Columbia University and the World Bank, between 85 and 95 per cent of the population and GDP located in disaster risk hotspots globally are at risk due to climate-related hazards.

44. Some progress is being made towards overcoming vulnerability to natural hazards by integrating disaster reduction measures into development strategies. Those efforts involve linking climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction, as well as ensuring that implementation of the Millennium Development Goals supports disaster risk reduction. Global initiatives are supporting the development of tools and guidelines to facilitate the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction into development planning frameworks. That constitutes an important leap forward in supporting the implementation of the Hyogo Framework. UNDP has initiated a global project in support of those objectives, using as a vehicle country cooperation frameworks, multi-year funding frameworks and country programmes. Guidelines for CCA/UNDAF on disaster risk reduction are being developed by UNDP and the Strategy secretariat with the International Labour Organization, WHO and others within the United Nations Development Group. Several countries, including Bangladesh, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mauritius and Uganda, have incorporated disaster risk reduction measures into their CCAs and UNDAFs, elaborated with the assistance of United Nations country teams. The ProVention Consortium is developing a set of disaster risk reduction mainstreaming tools, addressing the process of poverty reduction strategy papers, budgetary support and country strategy papers.

45. In the ongoing effort to develop generic indicators for the implementation of the Hyogo Framework, a parallel discussion is being promoted by the Strategy secretariat on revised indicators for the Millennium Development Goals to measure disaster resilience in progress towards reducing poverty and hunger, the provision of water, sanitation, security for slum dwellers and environmental sustainability. For instance, it is critical to measure whether the reduction of poverty, hunger and insecurity of tenure for slum-dwellers through Millennium Development Goal efforts is lost in years of drought, floods or earthquakes; i.e., it must be ensured that development gains are not undone by disaster losses. Interventions to increase agricultural productivity to reduce poverty and hunger through greater extraction of water must be balanced with water conservation measures.

Integrating climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction

46. The technical and institutional links between adaptation to climate change and disaster risk reduction are under increasing discussion. The eleventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Buenos Aires in December 2004, recognized the issue. Some countries advocate for the involvement of the disaster reduction community in the Convention Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technical Advice. Similarly, the inclusion of climate change as an underlying risk factor for disasters was greatly debated at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction. The Hyogo Framework includes the following priority action: "Promote the integration of risk reduction associated with existing climate variability and future climate change into strategies for the reduction of disaster risk and adaptation to climate change, which would include the clear identification of climate-related disaster risks, the design of specific risk reduction measures and an improved and routine use of climate risk

information by planners, engineers and other decision-makers" (see A/CONF.206/6, chap. I, resolution 2). In addition, with regard to resource mobilization, States agreed to "mainstream disaster risk reduction measures appropriately into multilateral and bilateral development assistance programmes, including those related to poverty reduction, natural resource management, urban development and adaptation to climate change" (see A/CONF.206/6, chap. I, resolution 2).

47. The Task Force created the Working Group on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction, co-chaired by UNDP and WMO, to focus on the promotion of an integrated approach to climate risk. The Working Group assisted the Vulnerability and Adaptation Resource Group, an informal group of resource stakeholders, in the development of a discussion paper entitled "Disaster risk management in a changing climate", presented at the Conference, for use in promoting climate risk management issues in development agencies. Other Working Group activities include collaboration with the Least Developed Countries Expert Group of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to assist the poorest developing countries in accessing disaster reduction best practices for adaptation to climate change. In the context of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), UNDP has initiated a programme for integrated risk management and climate change adaptation for a growing portfolio of projects. WMO has strengthened its capacity to assist countries in managing climate-related risks, improving historical climate records, capacity-building and training. Several WMO departments also contribute to the enhancement of regional climate outlook forum networks that strengthen capacity to anticipate and manage climate variability and change in sensitive regions and sectors. The Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre second International Work Conference on Climate Change and Disaster Reduction brought together country practitioners and experts from the two fields to advance collaboration.

III. Global development of early warning systems following the 26 December 2004 tsunami

48. Good progress is being made in developing an early warning system for tsunamis in the Indian Ocean region. This follows widespread recognition that, if such a system had been in place prior to the tragedy of December 2004, many thousands of lives could have been saved. The countries of the region are working to establish national tsunami warning centres and have agreed on the principles of a multilateral mechanism for strengthening regional ocean observing systems and exchanging data and warning information under the leadership of the UNESCO Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission. An interim tsunami advisory system has been put in place and WMO is taking steps to upgrade the necessary telecommunications capabilities. Multi-agency assessment missions led by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission are under way to identify country needs for technical assistance. Three familiarization study tours on tsunamis have been organized by the Strategy, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission and the Asian Disaster Reduction Centre for national high-level administrators of the region, and joint training for technical personnel and television broadcasters has been undertaken. Further activities are planned, including technical training and public awareness activities, to help develop the capacities of communities to understand their tsunami risks and to effectively respond to warnings, and the development of lessons learned and good practice information.

49. Those activities have been supported by a multipartner project coordinated by the Strategy secretariat through its platform for the promotion of early warning and funded through the United Nations flash appeal for the affected countries. The project provides an integrated framework for strengthening early warning systems in the region, recognizing the need to develop the tsunami early warning system within the context of multiple hazards, disaster management capacities and risk reduction. The project donors include the European Commission, Finland, Germany, Japan, Norway and Sweden. While efforts to date are putting the essential groundwork in place, it should be recognized that substantial additional effort and resources are still required to establish a fully fledged early warning system, with a sound technical footing, to be integrated, with effective public engagement, into disaster management and response systems for all hazards. It is important to note that several other ocean basins, such as the Caribbean basin and the Mediterranean basin, are also at high risk to tsunamis and need improved early warning capacities.

50. The Hyogo Framework sets out specific priorities for action on early warning for all hazards and on associated risk assessment and preparedness. In the report entitled "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" (A/59/2005), the Secretary-General proposed that the United Nations system should take a leadership role in developing comprehensive global capacities for systematic, people-centred early warning systems covering all hazards and all countries and communities. To that end, he requested the Strategy secretariat to coordinate a global survey of early warning system capacities and gaps, in cooperation with other relevant organizations, with a view to identifying priority steps needed to achieve such a comprehensive capacity. The survey is expected to be available in early 2006.

51. A number of important related initiatives have been pursued, including the launching of the International Early Warning Programme by United Nations partners at the Conference as a vehicle to stimulate cooperation and advances in early warning systems, the establishment of the multilateral Global Earth Observation System of Systems initiative, hosted by WMO, whose data underpin early warning and disaster reduction, and the statement of strong support that the G-8 leaders voiced this year at Gleneagles, Scotland, with regard to disaster risk reduction, the Strategy and the development of early warning as a means to reduce disaster risks. Under the auspices of the United Nations, Germany is organizing, to hold in March 2006, a timely third International Conference on Early Warning. The conference will, among other things, seek to stimulate and showcase concrete projects to build early warning systems for vulnerable countries.

IV. Enabling the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction system to effectively support the implementation of the Hyogo Framework

52. The successful and coherent implementation of the Hyogo Framework requires the strengthening of the capacity of the Strategy system to provide a solid basis for action, and clear roles and responsibilities among the various stakeholders. Increased commitment and engagement by Governments, United Nations agencies, regional entities and civil society organizations, and systematic tracking of disaster reduction investments are required. The consequences of the recent tsunami tragedy also demonstrated that such strengthening has become an urgent issue.

53. A number of studies, evaluations and consultations[8] on the functioning of the Strategy mechanisms, its current capacities and potentials and the capacities and value-added of the United Nations system to deal with disaster risk issues provided the basis for the formulation of new proposals for future functions and the development of the Strategy. They have built on the reports of the Secretary-General (A/54/497; A/54/136-E/1999/89) and General Assembly resolution 54/219 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/63.

54. The main elements of the proposed strengthened system are:

(a) Overall responsibility for the Strategy within the United Nations would remain with the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, with a permanent vice-chair representing the United Nations Development Group, supported by a management oversight board;

(b) An expanded and reformed Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction (for current membership, see www.unisdr.org) that would serve as a global forum on disaster risk reduction and advise on and commit to supporting the implementation of the Hyogo Framework. Its membership would include Governments and United Nations agencies, regional organizations and civil society, and it would be renamed the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction. A subsidiary programme advisory committee would review and coordinate the work programmes of the global platform and its associated entities;

(c) A strengthened Strategy secretariat would have the following core functions:

- Tracking the overall implementation of the Hyogo Framework, facilitating reviews of experience and preparing progress reports
- Promoting a worldwide culture of risk reduction, acting as a "clearing house" for information and communication materials, advocated with broad inter-agency collaboration and networks of expertise
- Facilitating and servicing the successor to the Task Force, the management oversight board and regional and thematic platforms and networks, encouraging policy development and reviews, and supporting cooperation among members
- Supporting national platforms for disaster risk reduction with information and policy advice, acting as a broker for the provision of technical expertise and resources to national and thematic programmes
- Serving as the focal point within the United Nations system for the coordination and harmonization of policies and strategies for disaster risk reduction, encouraging synergy between the humanitarian and socio-economic development policies and strategies of the United Nations system
- Advocating resource mobilization, establishing tracking and reporting systems, administering the Strategy Trust Fund for Disaster Reduction

(d) The secretariat would remain a distinct entity within the Secretariat, with accountability to the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs;

(e) Active regional networks to strengthen advocacy for disaster risk reduction and cooperation at regional and subregional levels in support to national initiatives and platforms;

(f) Thematic platforms or networks of expertise in support of specific topics identified in the Hyogo Framework based on needs and time-limited tasks;

(g) National platforms for disaster risk reduction, as designated by States, would have responsibility, as national forums, for coordination of the implementation of the Hyogo Framework, supported by regional and subregional platforms and networks for disaster reduction and United Nations country teams, where present.

55. The intention of Governments to maintain the informal Strategy Support Group is welcomed. It is a vehicle for strengthening the financing of and support to disaster risk reduction globally.

56. The objective of the proposed arrangements is strengthened management and accountability. The management oversight board, to be chaired by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, and the programme advisory committee would provide a stronger strategic and programmatic leadership for the Strategy system, especially through its focus on supporting Member States. The resulting framework of policy and direction would provide a clearer basis for the secretariat and the Strategy stakeholders to implement the Hyogo Framework.

57. The proposed modification of the organizational and management structure of the Strategy system is to be discussed at a Strategy stakeholder workshop in early October 2005 and submitted to the Task Force at its twelfth session in November 2005 with a view to beginning operation in January 2006.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

58. **The Secretary-General calls upon the Assembly to endorse the Hyogo Declaration and Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters, adopted by the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, and to invite States, civil society organizations, regional bodies and international organizations, including the United Nations system and international financing institutions, to comply with the request for implementation, follow-up and support, as set out in section IV of the Hyogo Framework.**

59. **In order to ensure international coordination, coherence and monitoring of progress in implementing disaster risk reduction at all levels, the Secretary-General recommends that the Assembly endorse the proposed strengthening of the Strategy system, its governance, secretariat and the distribution of roles and responsibilities among agencies in support of the implementation of the Hyogo Framework. That would include the establishment of a management oversight board to advise and support the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, a modified task force reformed into a global platform for disaster reduction, with a subsidiary programme advisory committee, and a strengthened Strategy secretariat to service the system at all levels, according to the proposal described in paragraph 54.**

60. **Recent experiences in sudden-onset and other disasters, including the Indian Ocean tsunami, have underscored the critical importance of disaster risk reduction. The Hyogo Framework has clearly highlighted the critical role of the United Nations in providing leadership and support in implementing an effective disaster reduction strategy. The Strategy Secretariat must therefore be strengthened and provided with secure and predictable funding. In this connection, it is recalled that the General Assembly, in its resolution 54/219, stated that the Strategy should be funded exclusively from extrabudgetary resources. In the absence of regular budget funding to ensure a sound financial base, the Secretary-General would therefore urge Member States to demonstrate their commitment to fully supporting the work of the Strategy secretariat by contributing to the Trust Fund for Disaster Reduction.**

61. **Based on recommendations of the Task Force, the common statement issued at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, the evaluation and experience gained by the Strategy secretariat, and the sixth High-Level Meeting with Regional and Other Organizations, the Secretary-General recommends the strengthening of regional mechanisms for collaboration and networking in support of national and local efforts to reduce disaster risk.**

62. **The Secretary-General reiterates the need to develop global capacities for systematic people-centred early warning systems, covering all hazards and all countries and communities at risk. They should make use of existing capabilities and be well integrated into disaster reduction and disaster management policies and plans. The Strategy system and its international early warning programme provide a means to stimulate the necessary integration of early warning endeavours across multiple hazards and across the many stakeholders involved. The Secretary-General encourages Governments and organizations to maintain their support for the development of the tsunami early warning system and other necessary early warning systems, such as those for tropical cyclones and adverse weather in the Indian Ocean and other risk-prone regions.**

63. **Sustainable disaster risk reduction needs to become an integral component of environmental, economic and social development. The Strategy system therefore needs to attach high priority to the strengthening of partnerships with intergovernmental organizations and international financial institutions. The Strategy system should develop collaboration with entities responsible for disaster preparedness and response, including military forces and national rescue services.**

64. **As the United Nations reform moves forward to bring closer together, and provide coherence to, all United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, there is need for greater political commitment for the systematic integration of risk reduction into development plans and increased provision of resources and application of knowledge of disaster reduction by Member States, their communities and the wider international community. We must be able to report by 2015 a substantial decrease in the number of victims and affected communities due to their ability to manage and reduce risk to natural hazards. It is as much an economic imperative as it is a moral one.**

Notes

[1] Eleventh session of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction, 24-26 May 2005, Geneva.

[2] The IOC Assembly, during its twenty-third session, adopted resolution XXIII-12 establishing an Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System.

[3] Including ESCAP, ASEAN, the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center and the Asian Disaster Reduction Centre.

[4] Africa Advisory Group, with Government representatives from Kenya, Madagascar, Nigeria, Senegal and Uganda, as well as an AU representative.

[5] Seminar workshop for national authorities on the theme "Risk management policies, systems and experiences in the Caribbean", Havana, 1-3 June 2005.

[6] "Reinforcing EU disaster and crisis response in third countries", Brussels, 20 April 2005.

[7] See Investing in Development: A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals (1995).

[8] Randolph Kent, "Looking to the future: practical steps to strengthen the United Nations relevance and value added in disaster risk management"; Ian Christoplos, with Alexandra Galperin and Yasemin Aysan, "External evaluation of the Inter-Agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction", report of the eleventh session of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction, Geneva, 24-26 May 2005; and Mukesh Kapila, "Note on future organizational arrangements for the ISDR System".

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Global road safety crisis

The global road safety crisis: progress on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 58/289

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General hereby transmits the report prepared by the World Health Organization (WHO) on the global road safety crisis in accordance with General Assembly resolution 58/289 of 14 April 2004.

* A/60/150.

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Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, prepared by the World Health Organization (WHO) in consultation with a number of partners, provides an update on the status of implementation of the recommendations made in General Assembly resolution 58/289 on improving global road safety. The report reviews some of the global road safety events of 2004 to illustrate the considerable momentum that has been created in addressing this issue. It describes how the coordinating mandate conferred upon WHO through the adoption of the resolution led to the establishment of the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration, a working group of 42 agencies committed to tackling road safety. The report describes the efforts of United Nations agencies and other organizations participating in the Collaboration to work within a common framework and provides examples of the ways in which these partners are working together on joint products to address road safety. It concludes by proposing a number of recommendations for the consideration of the General Assembly to accelerate the implementation of road safety activities around the world.

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I. Introduction

1. Road traffic injuries are a major public health problem and a leading cause of death and injury around the world. Each year nearly 1.2 million people die and millions more are injured or disabled as a result of road crashes, mostly in urban areas of developing countries. In addition to the enormous economic and social costs to individuals, families and communities, road traffic injuries place a heavy burden on national health services, in particular those of developing countries. Reducing road traffic injuries is important to the successful achievement of several of the Millennium Development Goals, particularly those related to poverty, child mortality reduction and environmental sustainability.

2. Road traffic injuries can be prevented. There are a number of factors that have been identified as increasing the risk of traffic-related injuries, including inappropriate and excess speed, non-use of safety belts and child restraints, drinking and driving, non-use of helmets by riders of two-wheeled motorized vehicles, poorly designed or insufficiently maintained road infrastructure and vehicles that are old, not well maintained, or lacking in safety features. Regulatory and other actions addressed at tackling these risk factors have led to dramatic decreases in road crashes in many developed countries. Similarly, experience in many countries has led to the conclusion that the creation of a lead agency on road safety and an accurate assessment of a country's road safety situation are important steps that need to be taken to effectively tackle road traffic injuries. The international community must take the lead by assisting countries in identifying road safety interventions that have been shown to be effective and in implementing them in their own countries in a manner that is appropriate to each cultural setting.

3. On 22 May 2003, the General Assembly adopted resolution 57/309 on the global road safety crisis, highlighting the rapid increase in road traffic deaths, injuries and disabilities globally, the disproportionate fatality rate in developing countries and the negative impact of road traffic injuries on national and global economies and requesting the Secretary-General to submit a report on the global road safety crisis. The report of the Secretary-General (A/58/228) was submitted to the fifty-eighth session of the Assembly as requested. On 5 November 2003, the Assembly adopted resolution 58/9, calling, inter alia, for a special plenary meeting of the Assembly to be held on 14 April 2004 to increase awareness of the magnitude of the road traffic injury problem at a high level.

4. On 7 April 2004, the World Health Organization (WHO) dedicated World Health Day to the topic of road safety. Events to mark the day were held in over 130 countries and included initiatives organized by Governments, non-governmental organizations, United Nations agencies, donors and the private sector. The goal of these events was to plan how to tackle the issue of road safety. More specifically, they aimed at raising awareness; stimulating new road safety legislation; creating organizations for road safety; and promoting further research. Many organizations that conducted regular road safety activities scheduled them to coincide with World Health Day in order to maximize their impact: for example, the Economic Commission for Europe designated the week around World Health Day 2004 as its fourth road safety week, with a campaign aimed at combating aggressive driving behaviour; the European Commission organized the first official signing event of the European Road Safety Charter in Dublin. The purpose of the Road Safety

Charter is to integrate civil society into the endeavour to reach the European Union target of halving the number of road deaths by 2010.

5. On World Health Day, WHO and the World Bank jointly launched the *World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention*. The report stresses the role of many sectors in the prevention of road traffic injuries, describes the fundamental concepts of road traffic injury prevention, the impact of road traffic injuries and the major determinants and risk factors and highlights effective intervention strategies. As such, it serves as both an advocacy tool and a technical document, including six major recommendations on what countries can do to address the problem of road traffic injuries.

6. In its resolution 58/289, entitled "Improving global road safety", the General Assembly recognized the need for the United Nations system to support efforts to address the global road safety crisis. The resolution also commended WHO and the World Bank for the initiative of launching the *World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention*, which contains a number of recommendations to guide road safety in countries. It invited WHO, working in close cooperation with the United Nations regional commissions, to act as coordinator on road safety issues within the United Nations system. In the resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in submitting his report to the Assembly at the sixtieth session, to draw upon the expertise of the United Nations regional commissions as well as of WHO and the World Bank. Lastly, it underlined the need for a further strengthening of international cooperation, taking into account the needs of developing countries, to deal with issues of road safety.

7. The tabling of resolution 59/289 was spearheaded by Oman and sponsored by more than 50 Member States. Several speakers in the debate stressed the urgency of a global effort in tackling road safety and called for action underpinned by United Nations support. During the United Nations stakeholders forum, held the following day, representatives from non-governmental organizations, the private sector, academia and some Governments discussed these issues in more depth.

8. The following month, the World Health Assembly adopted its resolution WHA 57.10, in which it accepted the General Assembly's invitation for WHO to act as the coordinator on road safety issues. The resolution on road safety and health also called upon Member States to prioritize road safety as a public health issue and to take steps to implement measures that are known to be effective in reducing road traffic injuries.

9. The events of early 2004 have generated substantial momentum globally towards addressing road safety. As a result, many Governments have declared their support for road safety initiatives, a number of non-governmental organizations have launched or strengthened their activities in this area and there has been an increase in the financial resources targeted at efforts to reduce road traffic injuries. Within the United Nations system itself, a number of agencies have used this momentum to initiate or accelerate programmes aimed at reducing road traffic injuries.

II. United Nations Road Safety Collaboration

10. In accordance with the coordination mandate conferred upon it by the General Assembly, over the last year, WHO, working closely with the Economic Commission for Europe and other regional commissions, has facilitated the development of a group of United Nations and other international road safety organizations now referred to as the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration. As of March 2005, this group was comprised of 11 United Nations entities, including the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), WHO, the World Bank, the World Food Programme and all five regional commissions. Thirty-one other international agencies working in road safety, with a broad range of skills and experience, are also represented. The number and range of sectors represented by participating organizations (Governments, non-governmental organizations, donors, research agencies and the private sector) from the transport, health and safety sectors attest to the broad support for this collaborative effort.

11. To date, the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration has met twice. The first meeting took place at WHO headquarters in Geneva on 1 October 2004, and the second meeting, on 16 and 17 March 2005, took place at the United Nations Office at Geneva. Representatives from 42 organizations have attended the two meetings,[1] which have allowed the participants to share their experiences and expertise in road safety. In addition, the sessions have been used constructively to allow the group to articulate and refine a goal and framework for effective collaboration. Specifically, the goal of the Collaboration is: to facilitate international cooperation (including at a regional level) among United Nations agencies and other international partners to implement General Assembly resolution 58/289 and the recommendations of the *World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention* and thereby support country programmes. A number of objectives to meet this goal have also been identified. These are: to assess the road safety situation and existing national facilities to address the problem; to develop guidance and support for effective road safety interventions; to provide capacity development on road safety issues; to advocate for and encourage demand for road safety; to strengthen global and regional coordination on road safety; and to improve the safety of fleets of United Nations vehicles for all road users.

12. Through discussions in the two meetings, the group has also identified a number of specific products (see sect. III below), the development of which will be directly relevant to achieving the predefined objectives, and has also articulated responsibilities and time frames for the process of developing these products.

13. At the second meeting in March 2005, the participants began to define a common framework for collaboration, in which the skills of all the agencies involved can be harnessed and collectively applied. It was also decided to concentrate considerable efforts on addressing a few specified effective interventions related to helmet wearing, inappropriate and excessive speed, drinking and driving, the use of safety belts and child restraints and cost-effective infrastructural changes.

III. Products of the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration

A. Data collection and research

14. In 2005, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)/European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT) Joint Transport Research Committee launched a working group project to achieve ambitious road safety targets. Members of the international working group are drawn from member countries of OECD/ECMT and from international organizations. The project will focus on research aimed at: assisting high-level decision-making on road safety priorities; identifying the progress required to meet national targets; analysing the funding of road safety measures; and describing issues concerning resource allocation. The study will then draw research-based conclusions on suggested best approaches to achieving the required further reductions in fatalities and on the required levels of funding and allocating resources to prevention and dealing with the consequences.

15. WHO has developed an online global road safety legislation database, building on the comprehensive work already undertaken for the European region by the Economic Commission for Europe Working Party on Road Traffic Safety. The database provides information on legislation targeting a number of factors that are important for road traffic injury prevention, including speed limits, safety belts and child restraint laws, helmet laws, blood alcohol limits, daytime running light requirements and mobile phone laws. The database is searchable by region, country and risk factor and links to other informative or legislative documents that can be found on the Internet. The database is located on the WHO website and will be updated regularly, through contributions from partner organizations.

B. Provision of technical support

16. Partners in the Road Safety Collaboration are producing a series of "how to" manuals that will provide guidance to countries on how to implement some of the recommendations identified in the *World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention*. These will be practical, user-friendly manuals that will provide step-by-step guidance on the implementation of specific interventions. The development of the manuals will be led by the World Bank, WHO, the Global Road Safety Partnership and the Féderation Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) Foundation for the Automobile and Society but will also incorporate expertise from the broad collaborative group. The documents will be produced using a standard template and one agency will take the lead on producing each of the manuals. At this stage, six manuals are planned: four of these will be on the key risk factors identified in the *World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention* — inappropriate and excessive speed, drinking and driving, safety belts and child restraints and helmets — while the other two will address the creation of a lead agency on road safety and traffic and injury data collection. Additional manuals may be developed over time.

17. The Working Party on Road Traffic Safety of the Economic Commission for Europe is currently revising the consolidated resolutions on road traffic and on road signs and signals. These resolutions build on the 1968 Vienna Conventions on Road Traffic and Road Signs and Signals and the European agreements supplementing them. The resolutions provide measures and practices to be implemented by member

States and include measures to address: traffic rules; alcohol; speed; communication and education; training; infrastructure development; technical inspections for vehicles; and recommendations for specific target groups, such as pedestrians, persons with restricted mobility, cyclists, motorcyclists and children. The current revisions, which are applied by countries on a voluntary basis, take into account the situation in as many countries as possible in order to make the resolutions applicable throughout the world. As part of its revisions to the consolidated resolutions, the Working Party has developed questionnaires on topics such as seatbelt programmes, motorcycle and moped safety programmes and controlling alcohol-impaired driving for distribution to members of the Working Party. These questionnaires will also be distributed by the Working Party and WHO to the other economic regional commissions so that data on these issues can be collected and summarized for countries outside of the Economic Commission for Europe.

C. Advocacy and policy

18. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the African Union and the Sub-Saharan African Transport Policy Programme jointly organized a meeting of African experts on 4 and 5 April 2005 and another meeting of African transport ministers on 6 April 2005 to consider the role of transport in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Both meetings highlighted the importance of road safety within the framework of the Millennium Development Goals.

19. The European Federation of Road Traffic Victims and RoadPeace are working to establish a World Day of Remembrance for Road Crash Victims in recognition of road traffic victims and their family's loss and suffering. A day of remembrance was declared in 1993 by RoadPeace, a British charity dedicated to supporting road crash victims. Since 1994, the third Sunday in November has been observed as the European Day of Remembrance for Road Crash Victims with religious and secular events held in participating countries. In 2004, the World Day of Remembrance for Road Crash Victims took place in Argentina, France, Greece, Luxembourg, Portugal, Spain, South Africa and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

20. Following the first United Nations stakeholders' forum, which was held in New York, the day after the adoption of General Assembly resolution 58/289 on road safety, the Task Force for Child Survival and Development, with support from several agencies in the global road safety steering committee, planned a sustained advocacy campaign in order to contribute to building political will and creating demand for road safety. Advocacy of this nature is seen as instrumental in mobilizing the resources that developing countries will need to respond to the global road safety crisis and carry out the recommendations of the *World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention*.

21. Since 1990, the Economic Commission for Europe Working Party on Road Traffic Safety has held four road safety weeks for its 55 member countries. The aim of the campaigns has been to influence the behaviour of road users in order to reduce the number and severity of road crashes and save lives. At its session in March 2005, the Working Party agreed to widen the scope of the fifth Road Safety Week to a global level, to hold it in 2007 and to focus on young road users. At the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration meeting, held in March 2005, this proposal was also agreed to. This global road safety campaign of 2007 is expected

to mobilize all actors concerned in both the public and private sector as well as at the local, national and international level. The regional commissions will participate actively in this global road safety campaign and encourage countries in their regions to organize national road safety campaigns related to the theme selected.

D. Accessing financial support

22. Despite the existence of cost-effective interventions, the lack of financial resources is a major obstacle to increasing road safety substantially. In addition to the efforts conducted by some foundations and bilateral and multilateral donors during the past years, a few promising initiatives are under way. It is important to point out, however, that despite these additional efforts, the number of bilateral and multilateral donors or private foundations that support road safety remains far from sufficient to address current and future needs.

23. Taking up the challenge of United Nations and World Health Assembly resolutions to assist developing countries in the area of road safety, the World Bank is currently investigating the establishment of a global road safety facility. The objective of this initiative is to create a fund to support those areas of global road safety for which there are currently limited resources. Globally, these areas include coordination, research and development of tools and products; nationally, they include the development of capacities, road safety strategies and national projects. As currently conceived, the three-year project will disburse $5 million through two separate funding streams, one for global work and one for national work. The initiative will initially be managed by the World Bank, with advisory input from a number of partner organizations.

24. The global road safety initiative, a partnership of seven private sector companies, was launched in December 2004. The initiative results from the work of the World Business Council on Sustainable Development Sustainable Mobility Group and is being facilitated and implemented by the Global Road Safety Partnership. The initiative is a five-year, $10 million project aimed at reducing road traffic fatalities in several developing countries through targeting key road safety themes, training road safety professionals and providing seed money to support pilot programmes to improve road safety.

E. Improving cooperation among partner organizations

25. At the second meeting of the Road Safety Collaboration in March 2005, it was proposed that the group define a framework within which to work. This involved categorizing the objectives that had been defined and setting these against tasks to be fulfilled. In this way, the areas of work/issues that need to be addressed can be identified. It was also proposed at this meeting that the Collaboration needed to focus more on the implementation of targeted actions. Recognizing the reference to the *World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention* in General Assembly resolution 58/289, it was agreed that at this first stage, the group should concentrate its efforts on addressing several of the risk factors identified in the report, where important gains could be made. These include: the use of safety belts and child restraints; the wearing of motorcycle helmets; taking action to reduce incidents of inappropriate

and excessive speed and drinking and driving; and taking into account low-cost infrastructural measures.

26. Following the first meeting of the Road Safety Collaboration, a resource to the activities and experience of those involved was produced, entitled "The United Nations Road Safety Collaboration: a handbook of partner profiles". The document reflects the road safety profiles of partner organizations that participated in the first meeting, containing an overview of each organization's road safety activities, and provides contacts for focal points to facilitate communication. This overview of activities being conducted in road safety at a global level should help to identify gaps and possible areas of collaboration. As more organizations are expected to join the Collaboration at follow-up meetings, the first version of the handbook should be seen as a snapshot of a changing group of agencies. Reflecting a dynamic collaboration, the handbook will be updated on a regular basis according to the involvement of partner organizations and their activities. It is hoped that the document will provide a valuable resource to those working or intending to work in road safety.

27. The meetings of the Road Safety Collaboration have allowed smaller groups with common interests to meet separately and discuss road safety issues. Notably, at the March meeting, interested delegates met with representatives from the regional commissions for Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Western Asia and Europe to discuss ways in which partners could better assist the commissions, some of which struggle to maintain road safety activities despite very limited funding. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia used the opportunity to request technical assistance to host a regional road safety meeting in 2005, involving 13 of its member countries. The forum also provided a valuable opportunity for the regional commissions to solicit input on planned road safety activities. For example, the Economic Commission for Africa plans to carry out a study documenting best practices in road safety, involving African ministers of transport and working jointly with the African Union and the African Development Bank.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

28. **Road safety remains a neglected and growing public health and development issue. To date, the issue has not received the levels of attention and resources commensurate with the magnitude of the problem. As a number of countries are on the cusp of making significant transport investments, careful consideration should be given to relative costs and benefits of different types of transport, including safety issues.**

29. **Nevertheless, over the past year, there has been increasing consensus around the globe on the need to address road traffic injuries as a global public health problem. This awareness has been matched by an unprecedented momentum in taking concrete actions to address road safety, both at the international and national levels. World Health Day 2004, the launch of the *World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention*, the passing of two road safety resolutions and road safety activities that were spurred by these events around the world over the past year all attest to growing awareness and commitment.**

30. **Within the United Nations system, many agencies have leveraged the events of the last year to start new, or to highlight existing, road safety**

activities. The regional commissions have accelerated or expanded their road safety activities while other agencies, such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), have recognized that road traffic injuries are a major problem among their employees, and are thus interested in addressing this issue from a health and safety perspective. The last year has also shown a new level of willingness among international organizations to collaborate on joint initiatives, as evidenced by the support for the United Nations road safety collaboration.

31. Despite progress in addressing the issue of road safety collectively within and beyond the United Nations system, the actions described above are only preliminary steps and much remains to be done. In the countries in which road safety has been put firmly on the political agenda, it is important that the momentum gained not be lost. In countries where road safety is neglected, the international community needs to find ways to encourage efforts to reduce road traffic injuries and to make national Governments aware of the need to integrate road safety into their transport and health policies.

32. Establishing the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration is an attempt to bring together a diverse but complementary group of agencies with a common commitment to reducing road traffic injuries. It is expected that this endeavour will facilitate cooperation among partners, thereby minimizing the overlap of efforts and maximizing effect. Identifying objectives and strategies towards achieving these objectives are concrete steps towards the achievement of the group's overall goal.

33. By engaging groups that have historically not been very active in road safety in these global dialogues on road safety, one output of the Collaboration has been the identification of new opportunities through the different skills and resources that partner agencies have brought to the group.

34. Mobilizing resources remains a concern for many organizations involved in global and national road safety efforts, as the level of funding targeted at reducing road traffic injuries is far from commensurate with the scale of the problem. Furthermore, the long-term financial planning necessitated by some organizational structures, such as the regional commissions, makes it challenging for them to add new unfunded road safety programmes to their predefined long-term workplans.

35. The coordination mandate on road safety has rapidly extended beyond the United Nations system to include a total of 42 organizations. The task of coordinating such a group is large and requires the investment of appropriate human and financial resources. The request from the General Assembly was unfunded and it has been necessary for WHO to find funding from other sources to support its coordination role. The assistance and continuing support provided by the FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration of the Netherlands, Michelin and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency for the first year of the coordination process are gratefully acknowledged. However, plans for future meetings and expanded activities mean that funding needs to be secured for the upcoming years. Providing funds to the United Nations regional commissions is also crucial in order to ensure their active contribution to improving road safety in their regions.

36. **It is envisaged that there will be future meetings held on a biannual basis, similar to the two already organized by WHO. The next meeting, which is to be held in the United Kingdom, has been scheduled for November 2005. Between meetings, WHO aims to facilitate communication through newsletters that update participants on relevant road safety initiatives and through regular contacts with participants. Participating agencies will further develop and implement the collaboration on a project basis.**

37. **It is therefore recommended that the General Assembly:**

(a) **Reaffirm its commitment to addressing the global road safety crisis;**

(b) **Reaffirm its desire that WHO continue in its role as coordinator of road safety within the United Nations system, working in close collaboration with the United Nations regional commissions, encourage Member States to support these road safety efforts and facilitate their ability to obtain financial, political and technical support;**

(c) **Recognize and encourage existing or new road safety initiatives by the relevant United Nations agencies and international partners;**

(d) **Call upon Member States to develop work programmes in road safety, noting that these programmes should be seen to be profitable investments for Governments to undertake;**

(e) **Encourage Member States to include road safety within their projects aimed at tackling the Millennium Development Goals;**

(f) **Encourage Member States to pay particular attention to risk factors such as the non-use of safety belts and child restraints, the non-use of helmets, drinking and driving, inappropriate and excessive speed, as well as to the development of appropriate infrastructure by passing and enforcing legislation, conducting necessary awareness raising campaigns and putting in place appropriate methods to monitor and evaluate interventions that are implemented;**

(g) **Encourage Member States to continue using the *World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention* as a framework for road safety efforts and implementing its recommendations, including the establishment of a lead agency on road safety and the development of a national action plan to reduce road traffic injuries;**

(h) **Encourage Member States to become parties to the Conventions on Road Traffic and Road Signs and Signals and to bring their national legislation into conformity with those Conventions in order to ensure a high level of road safety in their countries;**

(i) **Call upon Member States and the international community to recognize the World Day of Remembrance for Road Crash Victims, thereby signalling the appropriate level of acknowledgement that should be awarded to victims of road traffic crashes and their families, while helping to raise media interest and encouraging appropriate actions by Governments in addressing road safety;**

(j) **Call upon Member States and the international community to support and participate actively in the global Road Safety Week in 2007;**

(k) Request that the Secretary-General report to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session.

Notes

[1] Asian Development Bank, Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Association for Safe International Road Travel, Associations des Constructeurs Européens d'Automobiles, Bone and Joint Decade, European Commission, European Federation of Road Traffic Victims, FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society, Fleet Forum, Permanent Mission of France to the United Nations, Global Impact, Global Road Safety Partnership, Institute of Transport Economics, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, International Organization of Motor Vehicle Manufacturers, International Road Federation, International Road Transport Union, LaserEurope (L'Action de sécurité routière en Europe), National Highway Traffic Safety Administration of the Netherlands, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Permanent Mission of Oman to the United Nations, Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development/European Conference of Ministers of Transport, Prevention Routière Internationale, RoadPeace, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Swedish Road Administration, Task Force for Child Survival and Development, Transport Canada: Road Safety and Motor Vehicle Registration Directorate, Transport Research Laboratory, UNICEF, Economic Commission for Africa, Economic Commission for Europe, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), UNHCR, United States Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, World Bank, WHO, World Road Association.

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Item 62 of the provisional agenda*
Global road safety crisis

The global road safety crisis: progress on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 58/289

Note by the Secretary-General

Corrigendum

1. **Paragraph 16**

In the third sentence, *for* Féderation Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) Foundation for the Automobile and Society *read* FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society

2. **Paragraph 23**

In the penultimate sentence, *for* $5 million *read* $10 million

3. **Paragraph 35**

In the fourth sentence, *for* National Highway Traffic Safety Administration of the Netherlands *read* National Highway Traffic Safety Administration of the United States of America

4. **Notes, lines 8 and 9**

For National Highway Traffic Safety Administration of the Netherlands *read* National Highway Traffic Safety Administration of the United States of America, Netherlands Ministry of Transport

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New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support: causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development

Implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa

Progress report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The report reviews recent action taken in implementation of the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (A/52/871-S/1998/318). In particular, it draws attention to recent efforts in peacemaking and peacekeeping operations and highlights the need for special attention to post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding. To consolidate peace throughout the continent, African countries, the United Nations system and members of the international community need to increase their efforts aimed at conflict prevention and resolution, as well as strengthening peacekeeping capacity and enhancing cooperation and coordination between international and regional institutions.

* A/60/150.

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I. Introduction

1. The progress made in the implementation of the recommendations contained in the 1998 report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (A/52/871-S/1998/318) has been monitored and reported to the General Assembly since 2000. The present report responds to the request of the General Assembly, in its resolution 59/255 of 23 December 2004, to the Secretary-General to submit to it at its sixtieth session a further report, taking into account recent developments.

2. The progress made in the implementation of some of the recommendations of 1998, especially those relating to economic and social development, is dealt with in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "New Partnership for Africa's Development: third consolidated report on progress in implementation and international support" (A/60/178). The present report should therefore be viewed as a complement to and should be read together with that report.

II. Overview of trends and sources of conflict in Africa

3. When the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa was first issued in 1998, 14 countries in the region were in a state of armed conflict or civil strife. At present, only three African countries[1] are engaged in major conflict, although a number of others are experiencing civil strife of a lower intensity, involving ethnic and religious violence. Despite the reduction in major conflicts throughout Africa, civil strife in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the Darfur region of the Sudan have resulted in great and horrific loss of life, brutality and human dislocation; moreover, the international community's response to these crises has thus far been slow and inadequate. Efforts to address the crisis in Darfur highlight the need for improved African Union (AU) capacity to undertake effective peacekeeping operations and therefore also the importance of the United Nations system, the European Union and other development partners increasing their support to the AU to enhance its capabilities and effectiveness.

4. Most African countries enjoy relatively stable political conditions and the majority have democratically elected Governments. Under the Lomé Declaration,[2] the AU opposes any unconstitutional change of government that takes place in a member State of the AU.[3] The resolve of African leaders has been tested in relation to a number of Governments, most recently in Togo, where the AU resisted an unconstitutional takeover and supported the holding of elections.

5. Despite a number of positive trends and advances in Africa, the conditions required for sustained peace and development have yet to be consolidated throughout the continent. The Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change delineated the key threats which, if not addressed in an effective and timely manner, may become the source of new conflicts.[4] Of the six clusters of threats identified by the High-Level Panel, the two most inimical to durable peace and sustainable development in Africa are (a) economic and social threats, including poverty, infectious disease and environmental degradation and (b) internal conflict, including civil war, genocide and other large-scale atrocities.

While the attention of the international community has been forcefully directed to the importance of these threats, there is concern that the financial and human resources required to solve the multidimensional interlinked problems will fall well short of what is needed.[5]

III. Progress made in the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General

6. In the past year, further progress has been made in the implementation of the recommendations of 1998. Action taken, progress made and constraints encountered are described below.

A. Enhancing the environment for peace: peacemaking and prevention of conflict

7. The International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region was organized by the 11 core countries of the region with the support of the United Nations, the AU and concerned subregional organizations, to launch a process that will promote dialogue and interaction and ultimately consolidate peace in the region. The Heads of State and Government segment of the conference, held on 19 and 20 November 2004, adopted the Dar es Salaam Declaration of Principles on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region.

8. In the Declaration, the leaders expressed their collective determination to transform the Great Lakes region into a space of sustainable peace and security, political and social stability, and shared growth and development for their States and peoples. Concerning peace and security, they committed themselves to (a) fully supporting the national peace processes in the region and refraining from any acts, statements or attitudes likely to affect them negatively; (b) fighting genocide in the Great Lakes region; (c) strengthening cooperation in the area of defence and security and promoting confidence-building; and (d) promoting common policies to put an end to the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons, ensuring security at common borders and intensifying the fight against transborder crime and terrorism.

9. The International Conference was preceded in October 2004 by a regional women's meeting which adopted the Kigali Declaration. This declaration called for legislative reforms in order to uphold women's human rights and focus attention on the specific needs of female ex-combatants in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process. The recommendations contained in the Kigali Declaration were later integrated into the Dar es Salaam Declaration.

10. An advance was made in United Nations efforts to establish conditions for sustainable peace in northern Uganda with the organization in December 2004 of the first face-to-face meeting between a delegation from the Government of Uganda and representatives of the Lord's Resistance Army. Peacemaking efforts have been spearheaded by a national mediator, Ms. Betty Bigombe, and supported by the international community. The United Nations has closely monitored the situation in

northern Uganda, provided political and strategic advice to the national mediator and engaged in high-level advocacy to promote a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

11. The United Nations also continued to work with the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission with a view to finding a lasting solution to the inter-State border problem. A tripartite summit was held in May 2005 to review progress in the demarcation process. The Department of Political Affairs continued to provide substantial support to my Special Adviser and Mediator in his effort to help Equatorial Guinea and Gabon find a peaceful settlement to their dispute concerning sovereignty over the islet of Mbanie and delimitation of their land and maritime borders. In addition, I have dispatched special envoys to various African States to provide timely and discreet facilitation and to prevent tensions from deteriorating into open conflict.

12. In 2004, the AU Peace and Security Council was established with a mandate to identify threats to peace and also to have an operational role in peacekeeping. The AU led a number of multi-party mediation efforts to the Sudan during the past year. These efforts concluded in agreement on a protocol on the improvement of the humanitarian situation in Darfur.

13. The AU capacity to intervene and mediate in conflicts has been strengthened by the establishment of the African Peace Facility, funded initially by the European Union to support AU peace operations and capacity-building. In addition to European Union contributions, the Group of Eight (G-8) countries reported providing direct bilateral technical assistance and financial support to the AU, as well as to certain regional organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in order to support their conflict prevention and crisis management efforts.

14. Within the framework of the Joint Africa/G-8 Plan to Enhance African Capabilities to Undertake Peace Support Operations, adopted at Evian, France, in June 2003, a consultation between the AU, the regional economic communities and other partners took place in Addis Ababa in April 2005. The participants in the consultation supported full operationalization of the African Peace and Security Architecture, including the establishment of the Panel of the Wise, the African Standby Force and the Continental Early Warning System, and the early finalization of the memorandum of understanding between the AU and the regional economic communities. The consultation participants also agreed to cooperate in developing the "roadmap" for establishing the Continental Early Warning System to facilitate data collection and analysis for decision-making purposes.

15. Establishing the full complement of structures of the African Peace and Security Architecture is crucial to enabling the AU to recognize and diffuse tensions at an early stage through mediation and other intercessions. Equally important is the need to support the establishment by the AU of the Continental Early Warning System to facilitate the formulation and implementation of appropriate and timely response strategies to potential crises. The United Nations system must also do more to strengthen the analytical capacity of regional organizations such as IGAD and ECOWAS to avert new crises in Africa.

B. Peacekeeping

United Nations peacekeeping

16. During 2004 and 2005, United Nations peacekeeping faced tremendous challenges from a surge of operations, particularly in Africa. Even as a major commitment in Sierra Leone was being reduced, the Security Council established a large new peacekeeping operation in the Sudan in March 2005. The challenges facing the new operation in the Sudan are enormous, given the complexity of the situation, the sheer size of Africa's largest country, the absence of infrastructure in many areas and the proliferation of landmines around towns and logistic routes. Creating conditions for the safe return of more than 500,000 refugees and some four million internally displaced persons will be one of the keys to the consolidation of peace. Despite these challenges, the prospect for peace between the north and south of the Sudan is promising. It is crucial that Governments deliver on the generous pledges of support they made to the Sudan at the April 2005 donor conference in Oslo.

17. In Côte d'Ivoire, the United Nations, in close cooperation with the AU and ECOWAS, has worked to create a more conducive climate for peace. An agreement signed in Pretoria on 6 April 2005 under the auspices of the AU Mediator, President Thabo Mbeki, called on the United Nations to play a major role in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants, the preparation of elections and the restoration of security in the north of the country. The goal is to proceed with the full and unconditional implementation of the Pretoria Agreement. The United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) replaced the United Nations Mission in Côte d'Ivoire in April 2004 and has endeavoured to prevent hostilities by patrolling the Zone of Confidence, monitoring the arms embargo established under Security Council resolution 1572 (2004) and providing security to Forces nouvelles ministers.

18. In Liberia, steady progress has been made with the support of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) which has contributed significantly to creating a stable security environment, establishing a functional government, disarming, demobilizing, rehabilitating and reintegrating ex-combatants, and commencing the return of refugees and internally displaced persons. Preparations for the 11 October 2005 elections remain on course and the restructuring of the Liberian military is proceeding. The Government will need continued assistance so that it can deliver basic services and extend its authority nationwide, while addressing concerns about the lack of transparency in the collection and use of public revenues.

19. The United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) continued to make progress in complying with the benchmarks established for it by the Security Council, which include strengthening the capacity of the Sierra Leonean armed forces and police to maintain security and stability nationwide, as well as consolidating State authority throughout the country. The ongoing challenges will require a strong presence of the United Nations system after the departure of UNAMSIL, to help Sierra Leone consolidate peace.

20. In Western Sahara, efforts continue to be made to overcome the deadlock so that the people can exercise their right to self-determination. Meanwhile, the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) maintained its support of confidence-building measures, led by the Office of the United Nations

High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), including the exchange of family visits between Western Sahara and the refugee camps in the Tindouf area of Algeria.

21. The Burundi peace process remained on track, with several positive developments, including the holding of a successful referendum on the post-transition constitution on 28 February 2005, the signing of a declaration on the cessation of hostilities and the holding of local council elections in June 2005. The United Nations also supported efforts to establish an international judicial commission of inquiry in Burundi. The feasibility report on establishing the commission was published in March 2005 and proposed the creation of a twin mechanism, a mixed truth commission and a special chamber within the court system to bring to justice those bearing the greatest responsibility for crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes and to end the climate of impunity.

22. The United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) brought greater peace and stability to the Temporary Security Zone and adjacent areas between Ethiopia and Eritrea. UNMEE urged the parties to begin peaceful dialogue in order to address outstanding issues and proceed with the demarcation of the border without further delay. In this regard, I have encouraged the international community to intensify efforts to help the parties along such a path to lasting peace.

23. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, despite some progress by the Transitional Government in extending its authority, power-sharing was complicated by the fragile relations between its members. Preparations for elections were initiated and a draft constitution was adopted by the National Assembly. The United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) assisted in ensuring that the country's constitutional framework and its electoral laws were consistent with internationally accepted principles. The March 2005 announcement by the Forces démocratiques de liberation du Rwanda (FDLR) of their intention to renounce violence against Rwanda and to enter the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process was an important development. Despite MONUC preparations for repatriating the remaining FDLR combatants, there has been no tangible progress in that respect since the March announcement. UNHCR, however, helped some 9,000 civilians to return to Rwanda last year from the rain forest of eastern Congo, where tens of thousands of additional Rwandan civilians were believed to be living more than 10 years after the start of the conflict.

African peacekeeping missions

24. The AU is becoming a significant factor in peacekeeping in Africa. The first AU full-fledged peacekeeping operation, the African Mission in Burundi, was deployed from April 2003 until responsibility for peace operations was turned over to the United Nations Operations in Burundi (ONUB), effective 1 June 2004, in line with Security Council resolution 1545 (2004). In December 2004, the Government of the Sudan, the Justice and Equality Movement and the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army requested the AU to operationalize the African Mission in Sudan rapidly and fully and strengthen the Ceasefire Commission to ensure effective implementation of the Humanitarian Ceasefire Agreement and the agreed Protocols thereto.

25. Regarding Somalia, the AU mission to Mogadishu endeavoured to prepare a safe environment for the anticipated peacebuilding mission of IGAD. ECOWAS has

initiated an effort to develop subregional brigades for the African Standby Force and has been involved in peace-related operations, such as conducting a mediator's visit to Liberia and an ECOWAS mission to Côte d'Ivoire in cooperation with the United Nations mission in 2004.

United Nations support for regional and subregional peacekeeping efforts

26. A major focus of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has been to cooperate with and to develop mutually supportive peacekeeping activities with African regional and subregional organizations. In cooperation with the Department of Political Affairs, it has assisted the AU in developing the concepts for the emerging continental peace and security architecture, including the African Standby Force.

27. In May 2004, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations provided technical assistance to improve the AU Situation Room and early warning capability. The assistance mission, conducted jointly with the European Union, was aimed at completing the third phase of the project to enhance the AU information and crisis management capacity. In all United Nations missions where the AU has observers or some other presence, including those in Western Sahara (MINURSO), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), Burundi (ONUB), Liberia (UNMIL), Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) and Eritrea-Ethiopia (UNMEE), the two organizations work closely together, supporting and complementing each other's efforts.

28. The United Nations Assistance Cell in Addis Ababa actively supported the AU in developing the plan for the African Mission in Sudan and in managing the operation. The cell includes military, police and logistics experts. The United Nations is currently reviewing an AU request to expand the remit of the United Nations Assistance Cell to provide logistical, planning and management support on all peacekeeping matters.

29. The United Nations has provided logistical and other technical support for operations in the ECOWAS area and "re-hatted" the ECOWAS troops in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire. The two organizations are cooperating in controlling the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. Cooperation is facilitated through the United Nations peacekeeping operations in the area, as well as the through the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa.

30. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs have agreed to provide capacity-building support through a staff exchange programme with African regional organizations. In June 2005, the two departments hosted seven staff members of the ECOWAS Observation and Monitoring Centre for short-term training with relevant divisions of the United Nations Secretariat.

31. The United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA) supports regional and subregional organizations in developing capacity to play an active role in conflict prevention and resolution. UNOWA has facilitated and coordinated information exchange with a view to addressing cross-cutting issues confronting the West African subregion, such as small arms proliferation and movement of rebels across borders.

C. Post-conflict peacebuilding and reconstruction activities

32. Developing a more comprehensive and integrated post-conflict recovery and reconstruction approach is key to preventing the vestiges of past conflict from disrupting fledgling peace and stability. In this section, the range of actions and programmes that have been initiated to support post-conflict recovery are reviewed.

33. The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) secretariat has been tasked by the AU with developing a strategic policy framework for post-conflict reconstruction. The objective of the NEPAD African Post-Conflict Reconstruction Policy Framework is to establish an African-led agenda for post-conflict reconstruction and to address the nexus between its peace, security, development and humanitarian dimensions in Africa. The Framework seeks to encourage mutual consistency at a programme and policy level between the AU/NEPAD, regional economic communities, member States, civil society and the private and financial sectors in transitional countries, on the one hand, and the international and non-governmental organizations, humanitarian aid providers and private contractors that constitute the range of external actors, on the other hand.

34. A regional workshop, in which numerous development partners participated, was held in October 2004 to discuss the role of NEPAD and the development of the Policy Framework. Inputs from the workshop were incorporated in the strategic policy framework for post-conflict reconstruction on the continent. The Framework which was completed in June 2005 will be submitted to relevant partners and stakeholders.

Promotion of human security and human rights in Africa

35. Ensuring basic human security is critical to sustaining post-conflict peacebuilding and reconstruction in Africa. It requires that people from all cultural, religious and ethnic groups be protected and empowered. International organizations, especially those operating in the humanitarian and developmental domains, need to address the diverse threats to human security in a comprehensive and coherent manner. For this purpose, the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security, managed by the Human Security Unit of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has been providing support for projects carried out by United Nations organizations in post-conflict countries, such as the Sudan, Burundi and Liberia. Human security at the community and individual level, as mentioned in my report "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" (A/59/2005) is important for durable peace and sustainable development in Africa.

36. In Uganda, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) convened a workshop on the protection of civilians, in Kampala in September 2004, for national and local government officials, United Nations agencies, NGOs and civil society. The workshop identified key challenges and action that could be taken to improve the protection of civilians, particularly those affected by the conflict in northern Uganda. A national protection network was developed which is now being implemented through protection working groups. Similarly, in Togo, the OCHA West African Regional Office in Dakar organized a workshop on protection of civilians and international humanitarian law for government officials and representatives of civil society, to support the promotion of human rights. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to combat violence against civilians, including

sexual and gender-based violence and harassment of humanitarian personnel, OCHA regularly meets with senior government officials and representatives of the armed forces to advocate for better compliance.

37. United Nations multidimensional peacekeeping operations include human rights officers who help monitor the human rights situation and mainstream human rights protection approaches within all mission activities. Efforts are made through mission bulletins and radio stations to campaign for the protection and promotion of human rights to enhance a culture of peace. For example, protection groups chaired by UNOCI and comprising United Nations agencies, NGOs and government representatives held regular meetings to discuss human rights issues in the host country and issued periodic reports in an effort to raise awareness and ensure accountability.

Support in re-establishing governmental structures and the rule of law

38. United Nations peace support activities are aimed at promoting a peaceful environment and the rule of law to help prevent relapses into conflict. The Organization's multidimensional peacekeeping missions often include civilian police, civil affairs and electoral campaign components that work closely with local authorities and concerned agencies in the mission area to establish firm ground for post-conflict peacebuilding and the development of democratic governance.

39. Specific measures taken to address causes of conflict include support to Governments for re-establishing their authority over their national territories through the restoration of judicial structures and the rule of law, assistance in comprehensive electoral reform and the rehabilitation of administrative infrastructures. In Côte d'Ivoire, UNOCI has been coordinating closely with the Government of National Reconciliation, the AU and ECOWAS to address the multiple causes of conflict in that country.

40. In Sierra Leone, where UNAMSIL is drawing down, the mission and the United Nations country team are implementing a transitional strategy aimed at addressing root causes of the conflict and building national capacity for conflict prevention and lasting peace. Assistance is provided through diplomatic contacts, inter-agency collaboration and humanitarian networks. With the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and in collaboration with UNAMSIL, the Government of Sierra Leone is developing a national crisis management programme and strategy under the Office of National Security.

41. The Security Council adopted resolution 1580 (2004), extending and revising the mandate of the United Nations Peace-Building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS) until December 2005. Under the revised mandate, the Office supports efforts to enhance political dialogue and promote national reconciliation and respect for the rule of law and human rights. UNOGBIS strengthens the efforts of all national stakeholders to ensure the full restoration of constitutional normality, including through the holding of free and transparent presidential elections. In April 2005, a Special Envoy of the Secretary-General was appointed for Guinea-Bissau to facilitate peaceful and credible presidential elections as an important transitional step towards the full restoration of constitutional order and stability.

42. The two Ad Hoc Advisory Groups on African countries emerging from conflict set up by the Economic and Social Council for Guinea-Bissau and Burundi

have proved to be flexible and efficient mechanisms for bringing development partners together in support of countries which are searching for recovery and stability. Both groups have undertaken missions in the field and held consultations with government authorities, major socio-economic stakeholders, United Nations agencies, including the Bretton Woods institutions, civil society organizations, donors and other development partners. The operations of these Ad Hoc Advisory Groups have led to demand for the creation of similar mechanisms for other African countries emerging from conflicts.

Promotion of a culture of peace

43. United Nations peacekeeping missions are often engaged in the promotion of confidence-building measures between conflicting parties, civic organizations and various sectors of the population. In cooperation with United Nations country teams, missions promote national reconciliation through peace education, establish community conflict resolution mechanisms and encourage implementation of truth and reconciliation commission recommendations. They assist in developing programmes for inter-party dialogue to encourage interaction and regular consultation between parties in the Government and the opposition. In conjunction with civic and religious organizations, they carry out community-based reconciliation activities at the grass-roots level. United Nations public information and outreach sections work in close collaboration with the local press to promote peace and to diminish negative uses of the media, such as inciting ethnic hatred and violence. UNMIL in Liberia and UNOCI in Côte d'Ivoire use their own radio stations to provide impartial news coverage and programming designed to promote a culture of peace and national reconciliation.

44. The Department of Political Affairs provided substantive support to my Special Representative for Somalia and the United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS) in order to assist my efforts to advance the cause of peace and reconciliation through contacts with Somali leaders, civic organizations and Member States. From 2002 to 2004 UNPOS/Department of Political Affairs worked to support the Somali National Reconciliation Conference under the auspices of IGAD to assist Somali leaders in establishing the Transitional Federal Government in October 2004. UNPOS played the lead role in coordinating international support for the Transitional Federal Government to implement the agreements reached at the Somali National Reconciliation Conference and bring greater peace and stability to the country.

Controlling illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons

45. Control of the illicit traffic in small arms is an important national and cross-border concern in creating and maintaining a peaceful environment. In Sierra Leone, UNAMSIL and UNDP provided support for the arms for development programme that removed small arms and light weapons from circulation in return for incentives based on community development projects. The programme had a significant impact on confidence-building in local communities. At the request of the Prime Minister of Côte d'Ivoire, UNOCI in collaboration with UNDP organized a meeting on small arms and light weapons from 17 to 20 May 2005 in Grand Bassam. The meeting resulted in the adoption of a pilot programme on small arms and light weapons control and an international framework for the national commission on small arms and light weapons. At the subregional level, a small arms

and light weapons control project covering Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea has been developed at the initiative of UNDP and initial funding from donors for it is being sought.

46. In 2003, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa launched the small arms transparency and control regime in Africa project involving 10 countries: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Djibouti, Gabon, Kenya, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa and Togo. To date, almost all these countries have established national commissions for the fight against the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. Since the beginning of 2005, the project has moved into its second phase, which consists of taking stock of national capacity for the production of small arms and light weapons and ammunition.

47. In an effort to promote transparency in regard to small arms and light weapons, the United Nations Regional Centre, in collaboration with the AU, the Government of Mali and the UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, organized a workshop in Mali on "Promoting transparency in the flows of small arms and light weapons in Africa". The workshop provided participants with an opportunity to learn about reporting techniques developed by the UNDP Bureau to enable Governments to prepare their national reports on implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, which was adopted by the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects in July 2001.

Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and stability

48. Comprehensive disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes constitute an important component of multidimensional peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction efforts. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration consists not only of reducing weapons circulation and disbanding armed groups, but also involves the reintegration of combatants into society. While peace operations are often responsible for the disarmament and demobilization phases, they can also assist in the longer-term goal of reintegrating former combatants into civilian life, with the help of Governments and aid agencies. If the expected benefits of peace do not materialize, many combatants or other neglected groups, such as unemployed youth, return to arms, either in their own country or in one of the other fragile neighbouring States faced with instability. Adequate and more predictable sources of funding for reintegration and rehabilitation activities are therefore urgently needed. In West Africa and the Great Lakes Region, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process has also included supporting efforts to repatriate ex-combatants to their places of origin. UNMIL in Liberia disarmed and demobilized over one hundred thousand persons as part of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration exercises that ended in October 2004, during which time the Mission also oversaw the destruction of weapons and ammunition handed in by former combatants.

49. In Côte d'Ivoire, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process of UNOCI included verifying the withdrawal by the Forces nationales armées de Côte d'Ivoire (FANCI) and the Forces nouvelles of heavy weapons from the boundaries of the Zone of Confidence to agreed locations, which took place between 21 and 24 April 2005. UNOCI will provide technical advice for and monitor the dismantling of

the militias, as well as destroy weapons collected during the disarmament process. After the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme in Sierra Leone was officially concluded, with over 55,000 ex-combatants having gone through the regular reintegration process, the focus shifted to community participation and reintegration, with particular emphasis on youth.

50. In Sierra Leone, the Government and the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa of the United Nations co-organized a conference on disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and stability in Africa from 21 to 23 June 2005 in Freetown. It brought together over 100 African disarmament, demobilization and reintegration practitioners and stakeholders, as well as their international partners, to share experience and ideas on ways to improve the design, operationalization and implementation of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes. The conference recommended the setting up of an operational network of African disarmament, demobilization and reintegration practitioners, strengthening the link between disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and peacebuilding programmes, supporting national ownership and addressing the regional dimension of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. Other current initiatives include the Stockholm Initiative on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, which reviews funding, political and peacebuilding aspects of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes, and the United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration which works to improve the way the United Nations collectively designs, implements and monitors programmes.

51. United Nations peace missions support the peace process in host countries by funding quick impact projects aimed at improving the living conditions of war-affected people and assisting in the rehabilitation of local economies. Resources available for quick impact projects are used to finance projects in the areas of health, education, water and sanitation to contribute to the alleviation of hardship produced by the conflicts. Sixty-two such projects costing approximately $630,000 have been approved since the establishment of UNOCI. Projects are implemented in conjunction with governmental organizations and NGOs that possess the necessary expertise in these areas. The mission in Sierra Leone has used quick impact programmes to help in the reintegration of ex-combatants, who have contributed to small-scale agriculture and infrastructure projects that have had a beneficial impact on the local communities, as well as on the demobilized ex-combatants.

Addressing economic and social challenges

52. Besides helping to address the root causes of conflicts, United Nations missions that operate in the same region coordinate their efforts to address cross-border security, as well as economic and social challenges, such as issues concerning youth and child soldiers, HIV/AIDS and illicit trade in natural resources. Regular high-level meetings of the special representatives of the Secretary-General and force commanders are held to enable them to draw up joint plans of action and programmes focusing on issues of subregional concern.

53. Young people constitute the majority of the African population and are perceived as the future of the continent and its best opportunity of finding sustainable solutions to its most critical problems. However, the worsening conditions for this vital section of the population, in particular high unemployment

combined with a high incidence of HIV/AIDS, and poor access to health and educational services, have become a potential source of threat to peace and stability in the continent. Young people need to be integrated as productive members into society through employment and vocational training. Post-conflict countries such as Rwanda, Liberia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sierra Leone have a pool of child soldiers who, when demobilized, lack employable skills and job opportunities. Today, thousands of children continue to be abducted to serve as soldiers with armed forces and groups throughout Africa and I urge the international community and African Governments to give the utmost priority to addressing the critical issues of youth and unemployment, and in particular the debilitating problems of child soldiers.

54. In response to Security Council resolution 1308 (2000) of 17 July 2000 and the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-sixth special session on 27 June 2001 (resolution S-26/2, annex), which called on the international community to address HIV/AIDS within the peacekeeping environment, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) has provided support to African Governments and civil society to strengthen their response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Uniformed services report much higher HIV/AIDS prevalence rates than the general population. UNAIDS is working to ensure that the uniformed services become an important partner in the fight against HIV/AIDS, both within their ranks and in the broader community. Through close partnerships with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, United Nations country teams and other United Nations agencies, UNAIDS has assisted national uniformed services from 30 countries in Africa, most recently the Sudan, Mozambique and South Africa.

55. UNAIDS has also advocated for and supported technical capacity within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to mainstream HIV/AIDS policy development and implementation at headquarters and at the mission level by financing an HIV/AIDS policy adviser in the Department. The policy adviser develops guidelines and standard operating procedures for missions and assists in the recruitment of HIV/AIDS advisers for all major peacekeeping missions. Currently, there are advisers in seven peacekeeping missions in Africa. UNAIDS and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations are working together to initiate and implement HIV/AIDS outreach activities, both in host nations and in African troop-contributing countries.

56. The illegal exploitation of natural resources in conflict-prone and conflict-ridden countries is one of the contributory causes of conflict and of its recurrence, as experienced in Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone and Liberia, where natural resources have provided major funding for the perpetuation of wars. There is a need to continue to address this issue and utilize a range of instruments to limit the trade in conflict resources, including targeted sanctions against persons, products or regimes, certification schemes and the creation of expert panels to investigate illicit commercial activities in conflict zones, as has been done in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

57. The Kimberley Process was developed in May 2000 as part of an international consultation process to stem the flow of conflict diamonds. Since the launch of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, substantial progress has been made towards its implementation. The Certification Scheme now encompasses all the

significant diamond-producing countries, accounting for more than 99.8 per cent of global production, and is helping channel more diamonds into official government mechanisms in countries affected by conflict diamonds. The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme remains crucial in contributing to the consolidation of peace and in averting a potential resumption of hostilities.

58. In Sierra Leone, UNAMSIL has been actively engaged in supporting the Government to ensure its control over diamonds. As a result of this support, the Government of Sierra Leone has been able to extend its authority throughout the country, including in diamond mining areas, which has helped it to significantly increase official exports of diamonds.

Mobilizing resources for the reintegration of refugees and internally displaced persons

59. The United Nations system has supported efforts to mobilize development resources for the reintegration and rehabilitation of refugees, and to advocate for the early involvement of development actors in the transition period between humanitarian relief and development activities.

60. The continent again saw massive population movements during the past year. At the end of 2004, Africa was home to over 13 million of the world's 25 million internally displaced persons. The reintegration of returnees often poses a challenge and requires solid partnerships with a number of actors, including Governments and bilateral and multilateral agencies in order to share responsibilities and agree upon the way forward. The inter-agency "4Rs" (repatriation, reintegration, rehabilitation and reconstruction) strategy is well under way in Sierra Leone, north-west Somalia, Angola and Liberia. This integrated strategy involving all relevant stakeholders is designed to bridge effectively the gap between relief and longer-term development.

61. UNHCR continues to work closely with Governments and regional organizations to ensure adequate early warning of and planning for potential forced population movements. It also provides emergency preparedness and response training for Governments, regional organizations, national NGOs and other partners in Africa. In the peacebuilding context, a complete rebuilding of national justice systems and local administrative bodies is often required. UNHCR, in collaboration with other agencies, contributes to these efforts in returnee areas. It continues its capacity-building projects for national refugee administrations, including eligibility committees, to ensure that refugees have access to adequate refugee status determination procedures and receive protection counselling and interventions from the relevant government authorities and judicial bodies.

62. The Inter-Agency Internal Displacement Division of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs was established in July 2004 with the main objective of promoting system-wide improvements in the response to the needs of the internally displaced persons, as well as to provide targeted support to specific country situations. Owing to widespread concern about insufficient protection for internally displaced persons in several conflict-ridden countries, the Division is currently exploring a number of initiatives to enhance their protection. A more coordinated response to protection and assistance for internally displaced persons could help stabilize volatile political situations and prevent further population displacement, including cross-border movement.

D. Enhancing the role of women in conflict prevention and resolution, and in peacebuilding

63. The Security Council, in its resolutions 1325 (2000) of 31 October 2000 and 1366 (2001) of 30 August 2001, has addressed the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding. The United Nations, in particular through the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), has supported women's equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security.

64. UNIFEM supported the Sierra Leone Law Reform Commission to facilitate a series of national consultations on discriminatory laws and women's rights, leading to a gender equality bill. UNIFEM has built up a network of women's organizations, bringing women from opposing sides of the conflict together in dialogue to help them play a more significant role in the formal peace process. UNIFEM has also supported the Network of Women Parliamentarians of Central Africa and has worked with women in Burundi to support the implementation of the Arusha Peace Accords.

65. UNIFEM also worked with women's organizations and partners to support women during the elections that were held in March 2004 in Rwanda. These efforts resulted in a woman contesting the presidency and in women being selected for 48 per cent and 30 per cent of the seats in Parliament and the Senate, respectively. Women were appointed to 32 per cent of Cabinet positions in the new Government.

66. Regarding gender and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, UNIFEM and the Canadian International Development Agency funded the first organization for demobilized women in the Great Lakes Region, the Ndabaga Association of Women Ex-Combatants in Rwanda. Over 200 female ex-combatants from across the country attended a meeting in August 2004 which highlighted the lack of adequate attention being paid to the needs of women in the regional disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes and created opportunities for programming on gender and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in the subregion. A new strategic partnership between UNIFEM and the World Bank is leading the Multi-country Demobilization and Reintegration Program for the greater Great Lakes Region.

67. Progress has been made in developing policies and guidelines relating to protection and assistance for women. Yet, violence against women continues and often increases even as armed conflict draws to an end. Gender-specific threats to women and girls compound the challenges of ensuring their protection and the delivery of aid. Gender mainstreaming must increasingly be reflected in the work of United Nations organizations involved in peacemaking, peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction.

E. Financial and technical assistance to address underlying causes of conflict and support sustainable development

68. In its resolution 59/255, the General Assembly noted the support offered by the United Nations system in the context of conflict prevention and peace consolidation and called on Member States, in particular donor countries, as well as

other development partners and relevant regional and subregional organizations, to continue to provide financial and technical assistance, in a coordinated and sustained manner, to support activities in Africa.[6]

69. The G-8 members have established significant new sources of finance for the AU African Peace and Security Architecture, provided capacity-building support to the AU Peace and Security Directorate and collectively doubled official development assistance since 2001 with a view to supporting the achievement in Africa of key Millennium Development Goals, such as poverty reduction.[7]

70. The World Bank has addressed the unique needs of conflict-affected countries in several of its country assistance strategies. Furthermore, to facilitate recovery among the poorest African countries afflicted by conflict, the World Bank employs special guidelines for exceptional International Development Association (IDA) post-conflict allocations. The primary objective of IDA re-engagement in the poorest post-conflict environments is to facilitate the transition to sustainable peace after hostilities have ceased and to support the resumption of economic and social development. Additionally, the World Bank's Low-Income Countries under Stress Trust Fund and Post-Conflict Fund provide flexible sources of grant funding for many conflict-affected areas in Africa. The World Bank also continues to support several demobilization and reintegration projects across the continent, perhaps most prominently the Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Program for the greater Great Lakes Region.

71. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) also helps countries emerging from conflict develop a coherent macroeconomic framework to serve as a basis for the disbursement of donor support. IMF provides some post-conflict emergency assistance to countries that are not yet ready to implement the economic policies under the IMF traditional lending facilities. IMF has identified capacity-building as a key instrument for helping countries that are emerging from conflict to re-establish essential institutions and assists through the provision of technical assistance and training and the posting of resident representatives and advisers.

72. The World Food Programme (WFP) works directly with African Governments to tackle food insecurity by providing food aid and technical assistance to address the major symptoms and causes of food insecurity faced by Governments throughout sub-Saharan Africa.

73. In 2003 and 2004, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) designed and implemented agricultural and rural development programmes and fostered participation and empowerment of the rural poor as a building block of the community-driven development approaches which form a crucial part of the long-term vision of democratic governance.

74. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) has continued to strengthen and expand its cooperation with the United Nations Secretariat in its activities in Africa. UNIDO organized a ministerial round-table discussion on "Promoting productive capacity initiatives in Least Developed Countries and Africa" during the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council in June 2004. The meeting identified strategic constraints faced by the African countries that must be removed as part of the Africa Productive Capacity Initiative.

75. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has provided assistance to 16 African countries in the context of the joint International Trade Centre (ITC)/UNCTAD/World Trade Organization (WTO) integrated technical assistance programme to selected least developed and other African countries. UNCTAD has also collaborated with other agencies in the context of the UNDP/AU project for trade capacity development for poverty reduction and human development for sub-Saharan Africa. The integrated framework for trade-related technical assistance to support least developed countries in their trade and trade-related activities is being implemented in 23 African least developed countries.

76. The main objective of the World Trade Organization in its technical assistance for African countries is to enhance Africa's capacity to participate in the multilateral trading system. The WTO secretariat's technical assistance plans for 2004 and 2005 continue to accord priority to the delivery of technical assistance to developing and least developed countries in Africa.

77. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs has coordinated the Africa Governance Inventory, a flexible management tool assisting African Governments and their development partners to improve programming, coordination, monitoring, evaluation and mobilization of resources in governance. The inventory is also useful for sharing governance experience in Africa through the World Wide Web and for promoting regional partnerships.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

78. **Many recent trends in Africa have been positive. The number of major conflicts has been reduced, the innovative African Peer Review Mechanism has been initiated to support national efforts to enhance political, economic and corporate governance, and the continent has recorded improved growth rates, albeit insufficient to ensure achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, such as that of halving poverty by 2015. Continuing efforts and support by the international community, including United Nations organizations, are necessary to reduce poverty and disease and to raise governmental capacity to provide services and security, and remain key to sustaining peace and development on a long-term basis.**

79. **Another important factor in addressing the causes of conflict and contributing to durable peace and sustainable development in Africa is the commitment of the international community, including United Nations organizations, to allocate increased financial, human and technical resources to support regional, subregional and national security and development efforts in Africa. The international community should support efforts to provide adequate resources dedicated to capacity-building of regional organizations.**

80. **Early recognition of potential conflicts is critical to protecting lives and the social and economic fabric of societies. The African Union's continental early warning system should be established as a matter of priority and should be complemented by enhanced collaboration with the United Nations.**

81. **Given the determination of the African Union to strengthen its peacekeeping operations and to take the lead in such efforts in Africa, it is vital for the international community to provide the necessary financial support to**

develop African Union peacekeeping capacity and to establish the African Standby Force. In my report "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all", consideration of the use of United Nations-owned equipment and assessed contributions to assist African peacekeeping is recommended. These are matters that require strong support from Member States, in particular contributors and members of the Security Council.

82. **In the light of the growing demands for increased United Nations assistance to strengthen African Union Headquarters and peacekeeping capabilities, the United Nations has been providing limited logistical support to its African partners by stretching its existing resources, including logistics and technical training conducted by Department of Peacekeeping Operations at its main logistics base in Brindisi, Italy, as well as facilitating contacts with those that have the capability to assist. However, since additional crucial technical and institutional support to African organizations is needed in order to develop common standards and operating procedures for all peacekeeping operations, attention is drawn to the recommendations made in my report on enhancement of African peacekeeping capacity of 30 November 2004 (A/59/591). Careful consideration must be given to the options set forth therein, including the establishment of a revolving fund to enable African States to obtain strategic sea and airlift capabilities.**

83. **Close coordination among all partners involved in peacekeeping and peace support activities will be essential in order to optimize the comparative advantages of the various parties and maximize impact. The United Nations must play an active part in such coordination and in providing peacekeeping training for African troops. The United Nations continues to encourage consultations among key stakeholders to harmonize positions and avoid duplication of initiatives. Given the increasing number of actors involved in these efforts, it is also important to improve coordination and cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations, particularly in respect of the division of responsibilities between regional, subregional and United Nations peacekeeping forces, and to ensure the harmonization of decisions of the Security Council and the African Union's Peace and Security Council. Training programmes for United Nations and African peacekeepers should include clear information and guidelines in relation to HIV/AIDS and zero tolerance of sexual exploitation and abuse, a policy which the United Nations has already adopted.**

84. **While virtually all United Nations organizations and many Member States are already contributing to enhancing peace and development in Africa, efforts must be dramatically strengthened to restore security, provide for the safe return of internally displaced persons and refugees, promote and monitor human rights and increase income-generating activities, especially for demobilized ex-combatants.**

Notes

[1] Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Sudan; see "Africa, Conflict, Peace and Governance Monitor, 2005", African Centre for Development and Strategic Studies, Dokun Publishing House, Ibadan, Nigeria 2005.

[2] Declaration on the Framework for an OAU Response to Unconstitutional Changes of Government, adopted by the Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, Lomé, July 2000 (AHG/Decl.5(XXXVI)).

[3] See Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, article 7.1.g.

[4] "A more secure world: our shared responsibility", Report of the Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Changes" (see A/59/565), Part two.

[5] *Mobilizing International Support to Unleash Africa's Potential: From Rhetoric to Action*, Report of the Secretary-General's Advisory Panel on International Support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (June 2005); Millennium Project report, *Investing in Development: A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals* (2005); Report of the United Kingdom Commission for Africa, *Our Common Interest* (2005); and "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all", Report of the Secretary-General (A/59/2005).

[6] Additional information provided by United Nations system organizations and Governments will be made available on the website of the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa at http://www.un.org/africa/osaa.

[7] "Progress report by the G8 Africa Personal Representatives on implementation of the Africa Action Plan", G8 Gleneagles, 2005, pp. 2-6.